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THE LIFE OF FAITH AND LOVE

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Brief Expositions

BY

FR. H. REGINALD BUCKLER, O.P.
Præd. Gen.

1918-1922

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"Show me thy ways, O Lord, and teach me thy paths."
Ps. xxiv 4.

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The Life of Faith and Love

I

MAN'S DUAL LIFE

IT is well known, yet hardly enough realized, that all men here below have to provide for two lives—life here, and life hereafter. The powers of nature are for the present life, the powers of grace for the future life. Among the powers of nature, which are so many and varied in body and soul, two stand out supreme, differentiating man from all other creatures here below, and making him master of his acts and, in a sense, master of the world. These are reason and will. "Thou hast made him a little lower than the angels . . . thou hast placed him over the works of thy hands" (Ps. viii 6).

While man is master of his acts by reason and will, and consequently is a free being, in the nature of the case he is able to go wrong as well as right. But his will-power is there—he is not forced to the bad, nor is he forced to the good. But if he wills the better things, the light of his reason tells him that he is a dependent being, and that he must turn to the God who made him. It is *de fide,* defined by the Vatican Council, that man may know the existence of God by the light of his natural reason; with this he at once infers the Creator's wisdom,

goodness, power, and love, and the duty he has to the majesty of God, to give him supreme honour, worship, obedience, and love. All this is the beginning of what is called *natural* religion, as distinguished from religion which is *revealed* by God to men.

Looking abroad into the world, the man of natural religion sees the vast religious organization called the Catholic Church, and this throws a strong searchlight upon him. His natural religion is so far good, desirable, and even necessary. So it is, too, for all the children of the Church, enjoying the blessings of revealed religion. For, as the Angelic Doctor teaches, grace does not destroy nature, but perfects it (I, Q. 1, Art. viii, *ad* 2). So revealed religion does not destroy natural religion, but perfects it also. Considering man's destiny in his future life as a participation in God's own divine life, light, knowledge, and love, in union with our Lord God made man, with his blessed Mother, with all the bright angelic spirits, and all the saints, and considering that according to our degrees of merit here will be our degrees of divine knowledge and love hereafter, we gather herefrom that our life of divine faith and love in this life, which we enjoy by the benefit of revealed religion, given to us as God's gift and grace through the Catholic Church, is to fit, prepare, and dispose us to the life of eternal glory hereafter, and that therefore the Catholic Church, in the divine plan, is in every way formed, framed, and fitted to prepare man for his future life in the Church triumphant in heaven. Might we not at once feel the contrast between the

Catholic religion and that of all other sects separated from her? They have eliminated from their bodies any obligatory belief in the divine supernatural mysteries and powers which she has ever possessed and retained. They seem to hold but to little more than natural religion. If they hold to *some* of the revealed dogmas of Christianity, say the Trinity, the Incarnation, Heaven and Hell, Baptism and the Eucharist, it is perfectly patent that, one and all, they are powerless to impose the *obligation* of such belief on *all* their members—we say *all* because it is too evident for words that men may make, and do make, profession of any of these sects, and yet are left to believe practically as they like, maintaining the outward form of church-going people without feeling in any way obliged to believe otherwise than as the natural reason of each one may dictate.

The Catholic Church, as all the world knows, will have none of all this. And why so? Because she holds, and exercises too, the dogmatic principle, as having been formally entrusted to her by the divine Founder of Christianity, appointing her to be the teacher of all nations. With this divine authority she has been from the first the guardian, dispenser, and interpreter of the divine revelation. She knows what she believes, and means what she says—and she declares *anathema* to all who say otherwise. Neither the world nor the sects like this. Why so? Because they do not want to be interfered with in their belief. They want no dogmatic power over them. They want to believe as they like. What is all this? Certainly not

Christianity, which is a dogmatic religion. At best this Protestant habit of mind may be called *natural* religion—that is, leaving everyone to worship the Creator in the way that he may choose. Thus, Catholicism upholds divine revelation, and therefore dogmatic religion; and Protestantism, in all its shapes and forms, holds to natural religion. Practically, if it likes some of the Catholic dogmas, it takes them; if it dislikes others, it leaves them. One special instance of this is the Eucharistic doctrine, about which the Church of England does not know her own mind; and here, between Catholicism and Anglicanism, "it is the Mass that matters." Some High Anglicans hold to the Catholic doctrine. Others, and the vast majority, disbelieve it, yet both are Anglicans. In the ultimate analysis this is natural, not revealed religion —natural, because each believes as he likes, the dogmatic principle not being admitted. "I may love by halves, I may obey by halves, but I cannot believe by halves. Either I have faith, or I have it not" (Newman, *Discourses, Faith and Doubt*). Divine faith cannot be taken piecemeal; *it is all or nothing*. To reject only *one* point of faith is to reject the authority teaching it. Thus the inspired Apostle: "Whosoever shall keep the whole law, but offend in one point, is become guilty of all" (Jas. ii 10).

All this is avoided by the apostolic "obedience of faith," and faith, be it remembered, is an act of the *will*—enlightened, indeed, by right reason, recognizing the authority of the Church as divine and then submitting to it, knowing that man is not

sufficient for himself, but our sufficiency is from God. And God speaks to the nations through his messenger on earth, the Catholic Church, man being, not the author of his faith, but the recipient of it, and all this through the express command of Christ, with the conviction that salvation is at stake. Add to this the adaptability and full fitness of the Catholic Church in dealing with the souls of men, and in preparing them by the life of faith and love here for the life that is to come hereafter. The mysteries which she bids us believe with the authority of God, more especially the extension and perpetuation of the Incarnation by Christ's sacramental and sacrificial life in the Holy Eucharist, become the prelude of, and preparation for, the everlasting life of union with God, surrounded with the bright angelic choirs and all the saints and the souls of the just made perfect. For here on earth is our Lord's hidden Eucharistic presence, and "thousands of thousands ministering to him, and ten thousand times a hundred thousand standing before him" (Dan. vii). Thus, "Holy Church, in her sacraments and her hierarchical order, will remain till the end of the world a symbol of those heavenly facts which fill eternity" (Newman, *Apol.*). And the Church militant on earth becomes a reflection of the Church triumphant in heaven. "I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God. And I heard a voice from the Throne, saying, Behold the tabernacle of God with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself with them shall be their

God" (Apoc. xxi). Thus our Lord commits his life and his message to his Church. Let us not forget the heavenly life we already enjoy on earth. "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem," etc.; "Take heed and beware, lest at any time thou forget the Lord thy God, and neglect his commandments and judgements and ceremonies, which I command thee this day. . . . So shall you perish, if you be disobedient to the voice of the Lord your God" (Deut. viii 11, 20).

II

MAN'S JUSTIFICATION BEFORE GOD

IN the long history of the world, from the beginning to the end, considering, too, that we belong to a fallen race, with a human nature that still tends downwards and shows all along the line its constant proclivity to evil, the great question arises, how and by what means fallen man is to stand justified before God? Are there different means of attaining to this end? Were some means necessary in the earliest ages of man's history—others and different ones under the Mosaic law, and others still and of a different kind under the Christian dispensation? And what of all the heathen nations during so many ages of the world, living neither under the Mosaic nor the Christian law? Had they means of their own, in proportion to their condition, of obtaining pardon of their sins, and securing anything like a state of grace for their souls which would render them just before their Creator?

It seems that all these questions may be reduced to one—a general question of infinite import and interest, that has to do with the everlasting life of every single soul here and hereafter, from the beginning of the world to the end; this is, What are the essential conditions to be had and inviolably held by men, one and all, in this life to secure

infallibly the salvation of their souls in the life to come? Or, to put it still more briefly, What is the essence of man's justification before God?

Let us begin with the Church's own authoritative teaching. The Council of Trent declares as follows: "Our heavenly Father, the God of all consolation, when the fullness of time had come, sent his Son Christ Jesus into the world, he having been declared and promised to the Fathers, *before the law* of Moses and *during the law*, that he might redeem the Jews who were under the law, and that the nations who followed not justice might obtain justice, and that all might receive the adoption of sons. This (Saviour of men) God offered as a propitiation, by faith in his satisfaction for our sins, and not only for our sins, but for those of the whole world." Here man's justification is taken to be a translation from the state of sin in which he was born to the state of grace and adoption of sons of God, through the second Adam Jesus Christ our Saviour. This justification is not only a remission of sins, but sanctification and renovation of the inner man by the voluntary acceptance of grace and gifts. The causes of this justification are: The *final* cause, the glory of God and Christ, and life eternal; the *efficient* cause, the merciful God, freely purifying and sanctifying with the unction of his Spirit; the *meritorious* cause, his most blessed Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, who, "when we were dead in sins, for his exceeding charity, wherewith he loved us," by his sacred Passion, merited our justification, and satisfied for us to God; the *instrumental* cause, the sacrament of

Baptism, which is the sacrament of faith, without which no one can be justified; the *formal* cause is the justice of God, by which he makes *us* just, by which we are "renewed in the spirit of our mind," and are called, and are truly, just, receiving justness in ourselves, each one according to his measure, which the Holy Spirit "divideth to every one according as he will," and according to the disposition and co-operation of each one. And in this justification through the merits of Jesus Christ by the Holy Spirit "the charity of God is poured forth" in the hearts of those who are justified, and dwells within them. Hence, in our very justification, with the remission of sins, these all are infused into man's soul through Jesus Christ, in whom he is ingrafted, *faith, hope,* and *charity*. For faith, without hope and charity, neither unites perfectly with Christ nor makes man a living member of his body. Thus "in Christ neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails, but faith that worketh by charity." And when it is said that man is "justified by faith," it means that faith is the *beginning*, foundation, and root of all our justification, without which it is impossible to please God and attain to the fellowship of sons of God. Thus faith without hope and charity cannot bring men to eternal life (*Conc. Trid.*, Sess. VI, c. 2, 4, 7, 8).

"From the beginning of the world, therefore" (says the Catechism of the Council of Trent), "the most merciful God has never been wanting to his own," but "'at sundry times and divers manners spake in times past to the fathers by the prophets,' and pointed out to them, suitably to the circum-

stances of the times, a certain and direct path to the happiness of heaven" (*Præf.* Q. 2).

We learn accordingly from the Church's clear and authentic teaching that both under the law of nature and the Mosaic law man's justification before God was by faith in the future Redeemer—as S Thomas says, *per fidem Christi futuri*. This is in agreement with the inspired word: "He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but for those of the whole world" (1 John ii 2).

And again, "All have sinned . . . being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus" (Rom. iii 24). But with this we have to combine the express teaching of the Scripture in other parts; for instance, where it speaks of the faith that avails, as "working by charity" (Gal. v 6). And again: "As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead" (Jas. ii 26). Add to this the very explicit teaching of the Council of Trent, as given above, on the insufficiency of faith without hope and charity. We may note here that S Paul speaks at one time of justification by *faith*, at another time by *grace*. Now, the grace that sanctifies always implies and connotes the theological virtues, as we see above from the Council of Trent, and as is evident in the nature of the case—for no one could be acceptable to God at any time, and therefore no one be justified before him, who did not believe him, trust him, and love him. The very laws of friendship plainly declare this, even in the natural order. If we have a valued friend, we certainly believe him, trust him, and love him, and without such

conditions there would be no friendship. Hence the clear doctrine of Trent, that with the remission of sins the theological virtues of faith, hope, and charity are *infused* with sanctifying grace, thus making man the friend of God, and consequently just, righteous, and acceptable to him. Since the coming of Christ into the world all this is part of Christian doctrine, clearly taught by the doctors and saints of the Church and by the Church herself, as we have seen. In the law of Moses circumcision, as S Thomas says, was a *sign* of faith in the future Redeemer, not giving grace from its own virtue, but only in virtue of faith in the atonement of Christ, such faith justifying both adults and children. Thus, "Abraham received the *sign* of circumcision, a seal of the justice of the faith which he had" (Rom. iv 11). As to babes, probably their parents offered both prayers and sacrifices for them, all such being taken as *signs* of faith in Christ. But by faith in Christ is always meant a *living* faith, working by hope and charity, and hence the great law of love given in the *old* as well as the *new* law: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, soul, and strength. And these words shall be in thy heart, and thou shalt tell them to thy children, and thou shalt meditate upon them sitting in thy house, and walking on thy journey, sleeping and rising. . . . And thou shalt write them on the doors of thy house, and bind them as a sign on thy hands. Keep the precepts of the Lord thy God, and the testimonies and ceremonies which he hath commanded thee" (Deut. vi 5-9, 17). How clearly these words, and

so many others like them in the books of Moses, bespeak the practical working of the theological virtues! And we see the same throughout all the books of the Old Testament. How could it be otherwise, seeing that all are the words of God between himself and his chosen people? The Psalms are full of the theological virtues, and the prophets of old were all men of God, and therefore men of faith, trust, and love, both in the inspired words they communicated and the lives of contemplation and holiness they lived. And although in the new law the virtues are given through the sacraments, and man is thereby bound to their use when the need arises, yet God is not so bound, being Master of his gifts; and so by the working of his own good Spirit and the faith of his people, giving them signs and tokens of his presence in their midst, he wrought within them their sanctification and justification by the infusion of his grace, with its three great working powers of faith, hope, and charity.

Looking now at the nations in the early ages of the world, before the time of Moses, and, indeed, at all other times till the present, living as they do in ignorance of God's revelation, in a state of heathenism, the question occurs as to how the souls of all these millions might receive their justification before God. We consider those among them now who live *bona fide*. Because if they are in bad faith, by shutting out the light and grace of God from their souls, they will have to answer for themselves accordingly. But as they are all masters of their own acts by reason and will, a large pro-

portion of them may live up to the lights of natural reason by will-power, and so attain to a fair degree of natural religion, and to those who do what in them lies God will not refuse his grace.

First, we have S Paul's teaching in connection with all this: "When the Gentiles, who have not the law, do by nature those things that are of the law, these having not the law are a law to themselves: who show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience bearing witness to them" (Rom. ii 14). We may perhaps paraphrase this a little. When the nations of the early or later ages of the world, living in ignorance of revealed religion, do by the light of natural reason the things that are according to God's law, by believing, trusting, and loving their Creator, and grieving for any offences they may have committed against him, their law is that of right reason and will-power, which they have within themselves, and hereby they show the works of God's law written in their hearts, these works being faith, trust, love, and sorrow for sin, their conscience declaring that such are the duties of the creature to the Creator. "The work of the law," says S Thomas, "is written in them first and principally by the Spirit of the living God" (*Ad Rom.*, c 2, lec. 3). And let it be remembered that *natural* law is always *divine* law—for God is the God of nature as well as of grace. Therefore, this writing in the heart by the Spirit of God is God's own gift and grace to his creatures. And if only the creature corresponds to it, light begets light and grace begets grace, and grace always contains the theo-

logical virtues, for no creature can turn with his heart to the Creator without believing him, trusting him, and loving him. But in all these there are many degrees, from one, two, and three, to fifty and a hundred degrees, and in the earlier degrees nature and grace largely intertwine together. With many, indeed, nature overpowers grace, from the force of habit by lifelong repeated acts. But the Spirit of God is stronger than nature, yet not so as to compel it against its will.

The conclusion, then, is that from the beginning of the world to the end in all God's dispensations, whether in nature or under the Mosaic or Christian law, man's justification is by God's sanctifying grace, with its three virtues or working powers of faith, hope, and charity, leading to obedience to God's will and law, with perseverance in all to the end. But it may be that in such secret dealings between God and his creatures, the divine charity will, in numberless cases, accept many such conditions *implicitly* in the soul's conversion to himself without requiring them all *explicitly*, seeing that "the mercy of God is over all his works," and that whatever is received is received according to the condition of the recipient. But our aim has been to treat of man's justification before God *in se*.

III

THE THEOLOGICAL VIRTUES

MANY virtues, whether of the natural or spiritual order, help man to regulate his life and conduct in reference to his fellow-creatures or himself. The theological virtues are those which man owes to the majesty of God, putting him in due relation to his Creator, moving him to believe God's eternal truth, to trust his infinite goodness, to love him above all things for his infinite beauty, goodness, and love, God and the creature thus loving one another, this divine love of charity overflowing in love to our neighbour—all according to the divine will, as the rule of man's life here below.

At all times, from the beginning of the world till the end, in the nature of the case, man's justification before God has been, and must be, by the theological virtues, seeing that they take their form from the natural law, as declared by God's positive law, both in the Old and the New Testament, and are afterwards renewed and perfected as the infused virtues of sanctifying grace. Thus S Paul: "He that cometh to God must believe that he is, and is a rewarder to them that seek him" (Heb. xi 6). Here faith and hope are declared to be necessary for salvation. As to charity, where will a creature be who does not love his Creator? In the nature of things, men must love the God who made them;

the law of love to God and to one another is "written in their hearts, their conscience bearing witness to them" (Rom. ii 15). An example from the natural order will make this clear. All will love a valued friend. Friendship implies *mutual love and mutual communication* of good things. If one were to say, "You are my friend, but I do not believe you"; "You are my friend, but I do not trust you"; "You are my friend, but I do not love you," it is clear that all this is contradiction in terms, and that friendship could not exist under such conditions. But it shows that even between friends of earth there will always be faith, trust, and love. If these are not there, neither is friendship there. So, if the soul of man is to be acceptable to God, there must be faith, hope, and charity. These are the three virtues of sanctifying grace, placing the soul in the favour and friendship of God.

How fervent were the patriarchs and prophets of old in their faith, trust, and love of God! Look at Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Samuel, Isaias, Jeremias, Ezechiel, and all the rest. They were truly men of God, and governed by the Spirit of God. The Psalms are full of the theological virtues, and as for the "Gentiles, who have not the law, they do by nature the things that are of the law, and show the work of the law written in their hearts" (Rom. ii 14)—"written," says S Thomas, "first and principally by the Spirit of God" (*Ad Rom.*, c. 2, lec. 3).

Thus, "You that fear the Lord, believe him, hope in him, love him . . . and they that love

him will keep his way, and will be filled with his law" (Ecclus. ii 8-10, 18-19).

It is well said, therefore, that the beginning of our justification before God is by faith. In the Christian dispensation this is infused into the soul with the baptismal grace, our Lord God thus distinctly choosing his own friends from the beginning. In the earlier ages of the world the Spirit of God will have infused these three necessary virtues, placing man thereby in due relation to his Creator directly by God's own power; for although the Sacraments are necessary for *man,* when the law for them is there, they are not necessary for *God,* for the "Spirit of God hath filled the whole world" (Wisdom i 7). And as to children in those ages, they were probably offered to God by the faith and love of their parents, and so by this means and the inner working of the good Spirit attained to salvation. Now, in the perfect dispensation, with God's presence and authority in the world, represented by his Church, our knowledge of the conditions of salvation is quite clear. The theological virtues are infused into the souls of all the baptized with the infusion of sanctifying grace—indeed, they are the three spiritual powers of grace, by means of which grace lives and works in the spiritual order, just as in the natural order nature lives and works by means of the three natural powers of intellect, memory, and will. All these powers, natural and spiritual, in normal conditions, assert themselves when children come to the use of reason; then the child begins to think, to will, and to remember, and then it should turn to God by

faith, trust, and love. The laws of nature and of grace are both there together. Use a power, and it strengthens; neglect it, and it weakens. Knowledge grows, and faith ought to grow; the child remembers the nice things of earth, and it ought to remember the good things of heaven. It loves father and mother, and it ought to love God above all things. Thus, if nature and grace are both cultivated together, both will grow, strengthen, and develop. If any of the powers are neglected, deterioration will follow accordingly. Man has a dual life to provide for, here and hereafter. The natural powers are for this life, the powers of grace for the future life; both must be attended to together, and both should be trained to work together, for God is the God of both nature and of grace together.

It is the nature of divine faith to believe things we cannot see or understand on divine authority. As S Paul says, it is "the evidence of things that appear not." This need not be considered too difficult to the human intellect, seeing that in nature we believe things we do not see or understand upon human authority. Thus, we believe in the wondrous distance and size of the heavenly bodies, in the marvellous speed of the earth round the sun, in the mysteries of the deep, in a thousand historical facts, in the hidden and astonishing laws of reproduction, and so many other marvels of the natural order. It is quite credible, therefore, that if God is so mysterious, and so infinitely above us in the things of nature, he should be so likewise in those of grace. If he is marvellous in one order,

he will be so in another; and if we make no difficulty in believing the word of men, we should have none in believing the word of God. If he moves us to one, he moves us to the other. For "what man knoweth the things of man, but the spirit of man that is in him? So the things that are of God no man knoweth, but the spirit of God" (1 Cor. ii 11).

God does not leave himself without a witness on earth. The One, Holy, Catholic, Apostolic Church represents his presence and authority here below. A divine revelation implies and connotes a divine guardian, interpreter, and teacher of the truths revealed. The Church has always claimed, and still claims and exercises, the dogmatic principle, and the office and right thereby of teaching the nations. She is conscious of all this, in contrast to all other religious bodies outside her, who make no pretence to such a claim. By this and all her other divine notes and credentials her divine origin and authority are recognized. These are the *facts* and *phenomena* still before the eyes of the world. They are seen in Catholicism and nowhere else. Thus we see one God, one Christ, one Church, and one Chair of authority, the oneness of the Church following the oneness of God and of Christ. From all this it follows that divine faith cannot be piecemeal. It is all or nothing. God speaks—the Church teaches. No man can say, "I will believe some, not all." To do that would be to question divine authority, and that destroys the foundation in man's mind and will on which all rests. Eclecticism would at once follow, and divine faith is destroyed at the

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root. Henceforth it would not be God's truth in the soul, but man's private judgement. Newman puts this perfectly; he says: "I may love by halves, I may obey by halves—I cannot believe by halves. Either I have faith, or I have it not" (*Discourses, Faith and Doubt*). "Choose the Catholic Church for *your portion*." "Where thou goest, I will go. Where thou dwellest, I will dwell. Thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God." "This is the language of faith" (*Id.: Faith and Private Judgement*).

Divine faith is thus seen to be necessary as being a portion of the homage which the creature owes to the Creator. It is the homage of man's intellect to God's eternal truth. It is the recognition of the Catholic Church as his messenger on earth, and the submission at once of intellect and will to the "obedience of faith." The human element of the Church, indeed, is there all along the line; it must be so in the nature of the case. But the divine element is the Church's governing power and principle by the good Spirit of God, "bringing into captivity every understanding to the obedience of Christ" (2 Cor. x 5). Faith is thus a lamp to our feet and a light to our paths. It shows the way, but it does not go the way without hope and charity. Hope trusts to God's goodness and love, and the all-saving merits of Christ, and a soul hereby tends to God as its last end. In connection, therefore, with the virtue of hope, we have to undertake the lifelong work of spiritual progress. The light and guidance which accrue to a faithful soul through the gifts of faith and hope are expressed in divinely

beautiful words spoken to Marie Lataste: "Happy they who receive my light, who walk by the guidance of my light, and desire no other light but mine, for they have the true light, the light which will never fade, which for them will never suffer an eclipse, but will continue to enlighten them as long as they do not close their eyes to it" (*Letters and Writings*, ii 3). All should awaken their interest and even enthusiasm in spiritual and divine things by love of God's word, and holy books, and the lives of saints, and the great principles of Christian, Catholic, and spiritual life. If we do not secure the higher things, we are bound to fall on the lower. We cannot live without thinking and loving. The mind and heart are at once caught up by the things of the flesh if we do not give them those of the spirit. As S Paul says, "Walk in the spirit, and you shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh" (Gal. v 16). But this brings us directly to the virtue of all virtues, as being the root, mother, principle, form, and end of them all, as the Angelic Doctor teaches—divine charity, the *virtus unitiva*, the virtue that unites God and man together by mutual love and friendship. "God is charity, and he that abideth in charity, abideth in God, and God in him" (1 John iv 16). It is *all this* in the nature of the case, as uniting God and man together, for in the *Alpha* and *Omega*, the beginning and the end, all is included—*Deus meus et omnia*. But the *uncreated* charity diffuses in man's soul his *created* charity, as the abiding habit and virtue through which he works—*mediante habitu*. Thus, "The charity of God is poured forth in our hearts by the

Holy Ghost who is given us" (Rom. v 5; *S Thom.* II-II, Q. 23, Art. 2, and I, *Sent.*, D. 27 Q. 1, Art. 1). This charity, as the theological virtue, always signifies the love of God above all things, affective and effective, and this overflowing in love to our neighbour. And it further implies and connotes God's love for us. This is the "life of love" with God and one another, begun here, to be continued for ever hereafter.

We should do well to consider here the law of the formation of habit by repetition of act, for there is no escaping it; and if we choose the formation of lower habits, why should we not choose the formation of the higher? It is a common instinct to do for ourselves the best we can. To indulge an inclination is to strengthen it, either for good or for bad. Leaving alone the bad now, might we not awaken our interest and enthusiasm in striving towards the formation of the highest and best of all habits—that which makes everyone beloved both by God and men? *Dilectus Deo et hominibus.* The beginnings are already within us by the baptismal grace. It is only a matter of using what we already have, as we might use a little music that we have. If we use our music, it will increase intensively and extensively, to our own benefit and enjoyment and that of others; if we neglect it, it dwindles down, and dies out of us. It is the old law—use a power, and it strengthens; neglect it, and it weakens. All these laws tell with all their force when we come to the great habit of habits, that of the love of charity, to God and to one another. This love is, or ought to be, the inner

spirit of all our outer works—at least, if we aim in any degree at the "greatest and first commandment." And the great inducement we have for grasping the habit of habits is that love is the spring of all our actions in the natural order, and charity the spring of all the virtues in the spiritual order. Those whose love is bad are moved by the bad love to bad acts—as philosophy says, *operatio sequitur esse*. When we seize upon the highest love, which is the love of God, it moves us to the highest and best *acts*, which are acts of love to God and to our neighbour; and if we continue to cultivate this highest of spiritual habits, it moves us more and more towards the perfection of all our acts, whether to God or to our neighbour, and that is when we work in all things *prompte, faciliter et delectabiliter*. But only use and exercise can bring us to working promptly, easily, and sweetly. And a soul could hardly attain to this in the spiritual order unless it made the development of the habit of charity the one great project of its life. But here it is the same as it is in music—a young musician practises daily, and aspires even to perfection in his art. It does not follow he will get to perfection, but he loves at any rate to advance thereto. So it is in the spiritual order. No one must be disheartened because he cannot be perfect at once. All may advance and "press towards the mark." And it helps much to this to have a clear aim and a definite scheme.

IV

DIVINE AND CATHOLIC FAITH

A DISTINCTION is made by theologians between *divine* faith and *Catholic* faith, which, although in cases of good practical Catholics of little or no moment, as meaning practically the same infused gift of God, helps much in other cases to clear our view, chiefly of those who are validly baptized outside the pale of the Catholic Church.

Divine faith is taken to signify the infused virtue of faith within the souls of all those validly baptized, believing on divine authority all the truths which God has revealed. *Catholic* faith signifies the practical working of the virtue, by believing all the truths of revelation *through the living voice of the Catholic Church* as God's mouthpiece in the world. From this we see that *divine* faith may be had by those who are outside the body of the Church if they are validly baptized, seeing that baptism implies the infusion of grace, with its three powers of faith, hope, and charity. When such come to the use of reason, we suppose now that they do nothing to forfeit the virtue of faith—*e.g.*, by embracing *formal* heresy. Maybe that their religion is one of *material* heresy, and that they are in good faith. Maybe they are told that they belong to the Catholic Church, and that their sect is part of it. They have not theological

heads. All such, and many more of the like sort, may have the *divine* faith which they received with their baptismal grace, and yet clearly have not *Catholic* faith; because, in their own way, implicitly at least, they believe Christian truths, as they feel, on Divine Authority, and yet not on the authority of the living, teaching Church.

In saying this we are conscious that we are speaking comparatively of very limited numbers. Supposing we speak for five thousand, there will be ten thousand more, we might say fifty thousand, to whom these notions will not be applicable. We are constrained in such matters to speak largely in the abstract. When we come to the concrete, scarcely two individuals are alike. We are supposing, in what we have said, that the grace of divine faith received in baptism has not been forfeited in after-years. With the five thousand it may be so. But with the others, other conditions are surrounding them, and within them. When they come to years of discretion they knowingly and willingly reject the authority of the Church. Now, this touches the formal motive of faith. The Catholic Church is the trustee and teacher of the truths of God's revelation to men; and to believe divine truths with the natural intellect and will, instead of receiving them from her as the divine messenger, would give but a natural basis to the things of faith. Thus Newman confesses, on the last page of his *Development*, that he had been "using reason in the things of faith." To reason about things of faith, taking those we like and leaving the rest, is not faith, but private judgement

and eclecticism—*i.e.*, choosing what suits us. This is not Catholicism—it is the outcome of Protestantism. Catholicism is the recognition of the divine messenger in the world by finding the notes of the true Church and the motives of credibility, and then submitting our souls to her, representing the divine presence and power, by believing her word and obeying her authority.

Possibly, indeed, and probably, many of the five or ten thousand, and others unknown, may be in good faith, staying where they are, being only *material,* not *formal* heretics. If they live upright lives, with the disposition to obey God's will, should the claims of the true Church come before them, and with the love of God in their hearts, and contrition for their sins, they are reckoned as belonging to the *soul* of the Church, and may thus attain hereafter to life eternal. Such is the teaching of Pius IX in an Encyclical to the Italian Bishops, August 10, 1863.

There are others, however, of an intellectual turn, who think for themselves in religious matters, and maybe, spend years in doing so. The claims of the Catholic Church are often before them. And it has been said, "Woe to those who know and slight the covenant!" God's covenant is with his Church. His promises are there. The ordinary means of salvation have been placed therein. There are many who see and feel it. Newman said he would not "blink the question." It is to be feared that many here do indeed blink the question. The change and its consequences are so tremendous. "Affairs of the heart" are there. Attachments must be

broken, and utter sacrifice is before them. Alas! they shrink from facing the truth which carries with it such unwelcome consequences; they plunge into active works of outward benefit to others, and thus drown their troubles and their conscience too. All this is to sin against the light. God grant that they may repent, and may turn again to him, by renewed faith, hope, and love, for as it is they are neither in the body nor the soul of the Church. But it is never too late to mend. Yet it must not be forgotten, "All the ways of the Lord are mercy and truth, to them that seek his covenant and testimonies" (Ps. xxiv. 10). Therefore, as the covenant is in the Church, they must seek it, with God's testimonies, from the heart; and as they open their souls to the divine mercies, they must open them also to the divine truth, seeing that *all* God's ways are mercy and truth.

The Vatican Council defines as follows on this subject: "All those things are to be believed with divine and Catholic faith which are contained in the Word of God, written or handed down, and which the Church, either by a solemn judgement or by her ordinary and universal teaching (*magisterium*), proposes for belief, as having been divinely revealed" (*de fide*).

It must always be remembered that when speaking, as theologians do, in the abstract, application of abstract notions and principles cannot be applied universally or even generally to individuals in the concrete in such matters as we are here considering. This is excellently set forth by Newman in the following words:

"Among those external to the Church, some act simply from nature, others act from nature in some respects, not in others; others yield themselves to helps given them; others are in search of the Church and her gifts, and may be already in a state of justification. Hence it is *impossible to apply all to individuals, whose hearts are a secret with God.* Many are partly under reason, partly under faith—believe some things firmly, and have but an opinion on others. Many are in conflict with themselves and advancing to a crisis, after which they embrace or recede from the truth. Others use the helps of grace so well that they are in a way to receive its indwelling in their hearts. Some men of the world have never believed in their whole life, never had simple faith in things unseen, never had more than an *opinion* about them, that they might be true and might be false. And thus they think an absolute faith in anything unseen to be an extravagance, especially if they do not believe in the things themselves, or even reject them.

"From all this it might seem as if those who are external to the Church acted simply from nature. But it is not the fact. God gives his grace to all men, and to those who profit by it he gives more grace, and even those who quench it still have the offer. These are secrets with God. But the great and general truths remain, that nature cannot see God, that grace is the sole means of seeing him, and that, while grace enables us to do so, it also brings us into his Church, and is never given us for our illumination, without being also given to make us children of the Holy Catholic Church" (*Discourse IX, Illuminating Grace*).

V

DISPOSITIONS TO CATHOLIC FAITH

THE Catholic faith in divine revelation is a gift and grace of God, which is given to those only who are rightly disposed to receive it. "By grace you are saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves, for it is the gift of God" (Eph. ii. 8). If the gift of faith is not given, it is because God sees impediments to it in the souls of men. But when all obstructions are removed the gift is given. It is the same in the natural order. No fruit is given to the tree until the tree is fitted to receive it.

Speaking generally and technically, there are two principal ways that may be taken for helping to dispose men's minds towards obtaining this gift of faith, means which imply the natural use of the faculties given us by God—natural intellectual light, for instance, rectitude of heart, determination of purpose to seek the will of God and do it, resolution to forgo every hindrance to the gift, and a willingness to give all for the pearl of great price, trusting God's providence for the rest.

The two ways just signified are called in philosophy the *a priori* and the *a posteriori* processes; the *a priori* reasons from cause to effect, the *a posteriori* from effect to cause. For instance, to our matter in hand. If the divinity of Christ is proved, the truth and authority of his Church will follow, as

the effect follows the cause. If, on the other hand, looking at the *fact* of the Catholic Church in the world, and viewing her history, her unique position as a spiritual teacher among the nations, her unity, her holiness, her universality, her perpetuity, her motherhood of all the saints, we are convinced that she is divine, and we have her witnessing to the divinity of Christ, our faith in that dogma is then assured by the *a posteriori* process, by reasoning from the effect to the cause. It must be admitted that both the *a priori* and the *a posteriori* are valid methods of argumentation; of course, what has to be avoided in their use is the getting into what logicians call a "vicious circle," or proving one thing by another, and *vice versa*. Those of the acute and intellectual type would probably prefer the *a priori* method; whereas the unlettered millions would necessarily go by the *a posteriori*, as they are neither philosophers nor theologians, and so take everything on faith from the Church's word. Here let us say that as Catholic faith is a gift of God, we never profess to argue ourselves into it. All we do by the work of reason is to pave the way and dispose ourselves for the gift by removing hindrances and obstacles thereto. But as all the unlettered millions have received the gift by the baptismal grace, and keep it all their lives, they have no need of argumentation: they enjoy the light and love of God in mind and heart, and have just to attend well to the duties of life. It is for helping all those enquirers and aspirants to Catholic faith who, midway in the path of life, are arrested by a certain *awakening* of spirit, looking into the uncertain

future, with religion as they have it so unequal to the emergency. Where may I find a divine teacher to my soul who will tell me at once what to believe and do? So they think and speak to themselves. Many nowadays, even of the thinking sort, go straight to the *a posteriori* method, and take what we may call the "short cut" to the Church. They feel that if any revelation of God has been made, he will in the nature of things have provided a keeper, a guardian, a teacher and interpreter of it, and finding nothing adequate to this anywhere, except in the Catholic and Roman Church, they rise at once to the assurance that she is the divinely provided teacher of the nations, as claiming and exercising that office, and they find their duty in submission to her. With this, *cæteris paribus*, the grace of faith is given to them.

But there are many others of a different cast of mind. They are possessed by prejudice, and educated in suspicion. They are forever questioning the truths of faith, to see if they can understand or admit them, and practically they live in slavery to men's opinions. Thus they suffer from "that strange darkness of spiritual vision which is the terrible punishment of heresy," seeking and never finding, believing some truths of Catholic Faith, but not all, and in this way resisting the authority that teaches, and so making their own judgement the basis of their faith, as Newman says: "I may love by halves, I may obey by halves, but I cannot believe by halves. Either I have faith, or I have it not" (*Discourse* XI). These are they who listen to the authority of a few men, instead of the authority

of the Church. This habit of mind it is that makes the impediment to faith, and thus the grace of Catholic faith is not given to them. Faith is not believing what we like—that would be rather called *opinion*. Faith is believing, on authority, things that we do not see or understand. Divine and Catholic faith, therefore, is believing things not seen or understood, on the authority of God and of his Church, which he has appointed to teach all nations. This, as already said, is God's gift to all who put no impediments in the way.

Let us see now to the two processes named above, with a view of helping the seekers after truth to dispose their minds to the reception of the gift. The divine authority of the Catholic Church is the truth to be established. If we take the *a priori* argument, we must go to Jesus Christ first, and come to the Church which he founded afterwards. This is going first to the cause, and then to the effect. Christ first, and then his Church. The divinity of Christ has to be proved independently of his Church. If we go to the Church for proof of this, we borrow from the *a posteriori* process and get into a vicious circle. Those using this latter method may prove the divinity of Christ by the authority of the Church, like the unlettered millions do. But if the *a priori* is taken as a complete argument, we must stick to it. Nothing hinders the Catholic millions *already in possession of the gift of faith* from strengthening the intellectual basis thereto by considerations both *a priori* and *a posteriori*. But our case now is for those not possessing, but seeking, the faith, and they are free to

take one method or the other, but they must not make a vicious circle. Therefore, let us find legitimate and satisfactory proof for the divinity of Christ independently of the authority of the Church.

Let it be remembered that reason is a gift of God as well as faith. It is God's own light within the soul of man, and before the light of faith is given, the light of reason must be used. Reason proves the existence of God, as the Vatican Council teaches. Reason is, then, quite able to use the Scriptures, history, tradition, and the "great cloud of witnesses" for the truth of Christianity. It may perfectly satisfy itself as to the existence of prophecies and miracles, which denote the divine authorship of religion. The person of Jesus Christ as the founder of Christianity is then before us, and our belief in him brings a conviction of our own. Very soon the conviction of Christ's Godhead is upon us, by the testimony of prophecies, miracles, and his resurrection from the dead, which is at once a prophecy and a miracle of the first order. To prove that he is God as well as man, and must therefore be believed and obeyed *in toto*, Jesus Christ declares while yet living that he is going to suffer and die, and the third day to rise again from the dead. Here is the prophecy. If this be verified, the seal of divine authority is thereby given to the truth of Christ's declaration of his Godhead, and consequently to the truth of all he taught—to the authority of his Church as his own appointed teacher in the world, and to the truth of all the Church teaches. But the resurrection of Christ from the dead is the most clearly certified

divine historical fact, and the accomplishment at once of prophecy and miracle, by which Jesus Christ proves himself to be God as well as man—and the truth of all the rest follows. With this, in addition to the authority of reason and conviction, a second authority comes back from Jesus Christ to ourselves, which meets and ratifies the authority of reason and conviction, and we say with S Thomas the Apostle, "My Lord and my God." With these dispositions, removing every impediment, the gift of divine and Catholic faith is given and received.

Now to the *a posteriori* process. We may fearlessly say that this has the direct sanction of Jesus Christ himself, of the Catholic Church in her formal teaching, and is used instinctively by the children of the Church all the world over. Moreover, the unbelieving world itself, if religion is put before it, will not have the *a priori,* but asks for *facts* and *phenomena,* as the Jews of old did when Christ was among them, and explanations afterwards.

What does Jesus Christ himself say? "The works that I do, they give testimony of me" (John x 25). "Believe the works: that you may know and believe that the Father is in me, and I in the Father" (verse 38). Then, "by their fruits you shall know them." The teaching of the Church upon this in the Vatican Council is very explicit: "If anyone shall say that the divine origin of Christianity is not rightly proved by miracles, *anathema sit*" (Can. iii, *de fide*). Moreover, it is evident that the vast majority of the children of the Church at all times, in the nature of things, have as the proximate rule of their faith simply the living

voice and authority of the Church, so that their faith "cometh by hearing," according to the teaching of their catechism, that the truths of revelation are known by "the testimony and authority of the Catholic Church, which Christ has appointed to teach all nations."

And now *facts* and *phenomena* for the children of the world. Look into the world, and what do you see? There are the *facts* before you. The fact of the incomparable organization of the Catholic Church, as the weightiest representative of religious and civilized authority in the world. As an institution she is quite unique. She has seen the nations rise and fall around her, and has lasted 1800 years and more on the earth, where all passes away. Babylon is gone, Memphis is gone, Persepolis is gone, but "when Rome goes—the world." And she lasts, not in the midst of darkness and of nations slumbering, but surrounded by the brilliant light of modern civilization, shining far and wide, and in the midst of activities that wear out everything else. Scripture, tradition, and history, all bespeak her credentials as divine. Her head, the Roman Pontiff, traces up his authority in an unbroken line to the chair of Peter—and here the words of Jesus Christ are upon him: "Thou art Peter, and on this rock I will build my Church." The "great cloud of witnesses" are with him—the Apostles, the martyrs, the fathers, the councils, the doctors, the saints, the worldwide hierarchy of sixteen hundred bishops are surrounding him, all delivering, together with him, their united message to the nations. Three hundred thousand priests

are offering with him the daily sacrifice and the divine offices of the Church, for God's own great ends and the vast needs of souls. The great religious orders, with their large families of saints—S Antony, S Basil, S Benedict, S Gregory, S Bernard, S Dominic, S Francis, S Ignatius, S Teresa, S Francis de Sales, S Vincent de Paul, S Alphonsus, and so many others, whose lives have renewed the face of the earth—they were all children of the Holy Catholic Church, for she has always been, and still is, the mother of the saints, ever inviting her children to holiness of life and spiritual perfection. To the world she ever exhibits the notes of her divine origin, and therefore of her divine authority, being One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic. And, further, she is in possession of certain *facta divina,* from her institution to the present day. These are chiefly prophecies and miracles, showing her to be God's own work in the world, which divine facts are provided by God to give a *solace* to man's intellect in believing things which he cannot see or understand—for such is the nature of divine faith, the "evidence of things that appear not." If we saw the things, we should no longer have faith in them. But to believe on authority what we do not see is faith, the first of the theological virtues—it is believing divine truths on divine authority, having the authority of God as the basis of faith. But when the good providence of God provides these *divine facts* in the life of faith, he thereby gives to man an intellectual as well as a divine basis to his faith, and this is the solace to man's intellect in believing named above.

Add to all this that the Catholic Church, and she alone, claims and exercises the right of "teaching all nations," and none but she can do it. The world is against her, but this is another note of her divine origin. The world is not against Greeks, Anglicans, Wesleyans, Unitarians, or Rationalists, but against Romans, notwithstanding S Paul's Epistle to the "Romans," where he speaks of them as "beloved of God," and adds that his faith is one with theirs (Rom. i 7-12). In her wondrous unity of organization, head and members united—"one body and one spirit," she holds all countries, classes, ranks, and callings together in the "obedience of faith" and the precepts of holy living. In her science of dogmatic, moral, ascetic, and mystical theology, she opens the straight way to God, by the observance of divine and human law, the precepts of natural and revealed religion, the life of faith, hope, and charity, by the supreme love of God above all things, and this overflowing in love to our neighbour; and even pierces the veil of the spiritual world in the higher flights of divine, infused, and perfect contemplation. The world knows nothing of all this, and so judges what it does not know. Hence the continued opposition between the world and the Church, as it was with her divine Master himself: "If they have persecuted me, they will persecute you." Yet the Church perpetually revives after perpetual persecution, and her perpetuity in the midst of persecution is another mark of her divine origin. Moreover, she maintains her opposition to all heresies and schisms from the beginning of her existence to the present day,

cutting them off from her body at any cost, for the preservation of her unity, spiritual life, health and strength, for her constitution as divine cannot assimilate anything of human error. Add to this the Church's ever energizing missionary apostolic spirit, for the bringing of nations and peoples to the knowledge and love of God, and her adaptability to them all, with her perpetual fruitfulness as mother of the saints and of human civilization. Is not all this the work of God in the world, because it is divine rather than human? Thus it is that the light of reason, rightly used, leads man to the recognition of a divine teaching authority here below. As a human organism vivified by a divine spirit, the Church then says:

"Test me, and then see if you can trust me. Do I appeal with less power than others to your heart? And do I not appeal with incomparably more power to your intellect?"*

With all this weight of living and divine authority, man makes his submission to the Church, to Christ, and to God, and the gift of divine supernatural faith is given, the beginning of all our justification before God.

* From Mallock, *Doctrine and Doctrinal Disruption.*

VI

THE IDENTIFICATION OF THE TRUE CHURCH

WE hear much nowadays about the "reunion of Christendom," the "union of the Churches," and "Christian union." All this presupposes that Christendom is now divided, and has to be brought into union once more. In other words, the position taken is, that Christ made his Church *one,* that men divided it, and now they have to unite it together again.

Such a position, on the face of it, carries its own condemnation. It clearly stultifies the words of eternal truth, that the Church should be *one* and not many—not divided, as Christ is not divided. There is one God, one Christ, one Church, one Chair of Authority—that of Moses in the old law, that of Peter in the new law. The unity of the Church follows from the unity of God himself and the unity of Christ our Lord. Therefore, to postulate the Church as divided is *per se* a false position, and those who do so are guilty of "making a lie."

The attitude of the Catholic Church in the midst of all these divisions has been expressed in never-to-be-forgotten words by Cardinal Vaughan, when the fancied scheme for the "reunion of Christendom" on the part of separated bodies was presented to him by a certain Dr. Lund, now over a quarter of a cen-

tury ago. The Cardinal's reply was as follows: "The Catholic Church holds and teaches that *unity* is one of the four essential marks which Christ set upon her as credentials of her divine institution—marks of which she has been in possession from the outset, and by which she is conspicuously distinguished at the present day. To Catholics, therefore, the doctrinal disunion and divisions which rend mankind are evils which have their place not *inside* the pale, but *outside* it, and are the inevitable results of departure out of, and separation from, it. Believing as we do that for these evils there can be no true remedy other than that which Christ himself has ordained—namely, that the minds of men should become *one in hearing the one true Church, and by submission to her teaching and authority*, all our prayers and labours are fervently devoted towards this consummation."

We see thus the position of the Catholic Church standing all alone, aloof, and apart from all other religious bodies outside her, in her perfect unity and organization, one body under one head, embracing all nations, climes, tongues, and peoples, with her hierarchy of bishops and priests spreading over the world, and all her great religious orders and families in perfect union together, with her *cœtus fidelium* of 300,000,000, all different in their nationalities and individualities, yet all one in the "obedience of faith." Here is the Gospel ideal, straight from the hands of our Lord—authority in teaching—obedience in believing. One body with its many members, and one spirit animating all. This is the first note of the true

Church—Unity. One God, one Christ, one Church. What a contrast it makes to all the sects of fragmentary Christianity separated from her. They are neither united with her nor united among themselves. And they feel it. Look at the isolation of Anglicans—not united with West nor East, nor with any of the denominations, nor with themselves either. And so it has been said that Anglicanism is a respectable way of believing what you like. Separated from the Chair of Peter, they have no living dogmatic principle. Without this how can they be one in their belief? Practically, they settle such things by a few leading men, and notably by the editor of the *Church Times*. Others among them follow the "parish theory," having a beautiful church, quite captivating by itself, a splendid choir and organ, an excellent vicar, and most attractive services. With all this they ignore the state of things outside them, and are instructed to turn away from the Catholic claims as temptations. The thought of being separated from the Church Universal apparently does not work in them, being shut out by their own sweet parish surroundings. How shall we view all these things *objectively?* We say *objectively,* because *subjectively* we like to think that their hearts are a secret with God, and that their heresy is rather *material* than *formal. Delicta quis intelligit?* Objectively we regard all the sweet parish workings as so much excellent *natural religion.* And, as S Teresa says somewhere, at present "more is not given to them." They may, of course, shut out the light, either ignorantly or knowingly. Certainly if the shutters

are kept up the light will not come in. Many there are who, after a long period of darkness, obtain the light. Will-power and grace will obtain it. The love of God, above all, will do it. But so often lower loves get the upper hand, and thus impediments to grace are there; and as long as the impediments are there, the gift is not given. Faith is God's own gift, not the product of man's intellect. Intellect and will have both to be subdued to God before the gift of faith is given and received. All those, and many there are, who go upon the lines of their natural activities, and pleasant surroundings, may enjoy a fair amount of natural religion, but for the gift of faith in revealed religion they will have to deny themselves, and make the will of God the rule of life. God has placed his Church in the world to *interfere* with man's natural activities (as Newman tells us)—happy and blessed interference indeed, for unless Divine grace governs human nature, with all its proclivities to evil, surrounded with the wiles of the world, the flesh, and the devil, it will easily and quickly get off the right way to God, and come to inevitable and downright disaster. Thus the Church is a perpetual bulwark against man's unreformed nature. But such a tremendous power, needless to say, is not observable in any of the separated sects, for want of the living authority and dogmatic principle of Catholicism.

Most of these sects, or all of them, and especially the Anglican, maintain and declare that they are all parts and portions of the one true Church. Presumably they are obliged to say this, otherwise

they are nowhere. But such a position postulates a divided Church. And this is plainly against Scripture and the Nicene Creed, to which they all profess to adhere. But the necessity is there. *De facto* they are separated and isolated. Therefore a theory *must* be supplied in accordance with the facts. They say they are a *part* of the Church. Yet they are not recognized as such by the Church Universal, nor by the world in general. This is a serious and solemn consideration for them—or ought to be. Here the law of the influence of the heart upon the intellect meets them—and so many appear not to wish to be persuaded because of affairs of the heart. To be a *part* of the Church when not united with it is a mental fiction, or an *ipse dixit* of one here and there, with the judgement of the Church Universal against them. Besides, it is a contradiction in terms. Union and separation cannot stand together. One is either inside the Church or outside it. The unity of the Church is, or ought to be, the crucial question between all Catholics and non-Catholics, and this it is which in fact brings so many converts from the ranks of the Anglican clergy into the Church of the Rock and the Keys. As there is but *one* God, so there is but *one* Christ, and there can be but *one* Church. The unity of the Church is from the unity of God and the unity of Christ. Let this be well considered and all impediments removed, and the gift of faith will be given. What a serious question it is for every earnest soul, faith being the first condition of all our justification before God, without which it is impossible to please him (Heb. xi 6)!

Nor is faith the believing as we please, but the recognition of the divine authority on earth, and the submission of both intellect and will to all the Church teaches. What is this but the submission of the creature to the Creator? This faith it is that enlightens the mind and shows the way to all the rest—and then we have to be doers of the word, and not hearers only. Is not all this clear, enabling us in the midst of all human creations and aberrations to *identify* the one true Church as God's own provision for teaching the truths of his revelation to the nations of the world?

VII

RELIGIOUS INDIFFERENCE

"WE all worship the same God." Yes. But the point is, we must worship him according to his will, not according to our poor weak fancies. The first fundamental law of creation is that the creature must do the will of the Creator. The Creator is worthy of supreme worship, reverence, love, and obedience from his creatures. As to mere fancy and imagination, we must know that the imagination is "a forward and delusive faculty, ever obtruding beyond its sphere" (Butler, *Analogy*). Right reason and faith are our lights in the way of God—the one a natural light, the other a divine light. Let us be under the governance of the higher powers which God gives us; the lower powers have to serve the higher, not dominate them.

First, then, what does right reason tell us about our Creator? It tells us of the existence of the great primal Cause—of his beauty, power, wisdom, goodness, and love. Then the inference follows—the creature must admire, praise, love, serve, and entreat the Creator. All this is the natural working of the light of reason, and it begets what is called natural religion, God indeed "working all in all," for he is the God of his own creation. S Paul points to all this when he says: "The invisible things of God, from the creation of the

world, are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made; his eternal power also, and divinity" (Rom. i 20). Then, speaking of those who "do by nature the things of the law," he says: "They show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience bearing witness to them" (Rom. ii 14). Thus the Vatican Council strikes with *anathema* "those who say that the Creator cannot certainly be known by the natural light of human reason through created things" (*Can. de Revel., i*). Moreover, we see from the sages of old how they knew and reverenced the Creator by the natural lights of reason. Thus Cicero: "The beauty of this world and the order of the heavenly bodies move us to confess and acknowledge a divine and eternal nature, as an object to be seen and glorified by man" (*de Div.*). Sophocles: "I cannot cease to call on God for aid" (*Œd. Tyr.*, 884). Ovid: "God is within us—as he works, our souls are fired" (*Fast.* vi 5) Virgil: "O you that suffer, God will also bring this to an end" (*Æneid*). And so much more.

Now, according to the teaching of the Catholic Church, although so much may be known and done by the natural light of right reason, yet, of course, reason cannot rise above itself. It is a natural gift of God, and its workings cannot exceed those of the natural order, according to the saying of philosophy, *operatio sequitur esse*—the operations of a thing follow its being. Thus, according to Christian and Catholic teaching, following the inspired word, God adds the gift of his grace to that of our nature, and the gift of faith to that of reason, and thus man

is enabled to rise to the supernatural in his knowledge and love of the Creator. Indeed, nature, before receiving the additional gift of grace—speaking now of those whose nature is already developed—cries out, as a child in the dark, for *more* knowledge, love, and power than it feels itself possessed of. It is the call of the creature to the Creator, to give it more of himself, to help its weakness, that it may know him more, and love and serve him better. It is the desire for God to reveal himself to men, to speak to them, to help them, to draw them, to give himself to them, if possible, more closely, more familiarly, than he gives himself to them in the natural order of things. Why do they ask all this? Do they not know what God has already done for them? Many know, but many more do not know, and these it is who, living up to natural lights and natural laws, stretch out their hands and hearts to the Creator, and desire to know, love, and enjoy him more than they can, or do, by the limited powers and workings of their nature. Then, looking abroad into the world and viewing the long history of Christianity, they find the weightiest of organizations in the world, and this pressing itself upon them. It is the Church, whose circumference is Catholic and whose centre is Roman. There is no denying her, because she is an objective *fact*. God's divine revelation was committed to her at the beginning, when the eternal Son formed and fashioned her for the teaching of the nations, changed the name of his chief Apostle into Peter, signifying *Rock*, associated the other Apostles with himself and Peter, and sent down

the Spirit of God upon them all on the Day of Pentecost, that all might be men of God and fitted to work, in his Spirit, God's own great work in the world. This has been well spoken of as the divine *interference* with human nature. For truly human nature is so forward and delusive that, except for the interference of divine grace, with a view to putting and keeping nature on the right way to God, no man's salvation could be secure.

Soon, by the governance of the Spirit of God, and man's willing submission thereto, by reforming and regulating the powers of nature by those of grace, the Catholic Church becomes the Mother of the saints—and such she has always been, still is, and will be. Holiness is always one of her marks. By her authority as Christ's mystical body, and the home of the Spirit of God on earth, she makes in every way full provision for the souls of men. As God's oracle in the world, she teaches the truths of revelation to the nations with an infallible voice. Possessed, by our Lord's gift of himself, of his hidden yet real presence, of which the shining cloud in the temple of old was the type and figure, the Church becomes the home of our Lord's sacramental and sacrificial life on earth. Thus, as of old there was the daily sacrifice, so now there is the daily Mass—our Lord coming to us, and we going to him; for he says: "No man cometh to the Father but by me." And further, the divine offices of the Church are always rising from earth to heaven, and thus "the Catholic religion is the coming of the unseen world into this" (Newman, *Discourse XIII*). The Church's sacra-

mental system is working all the world over. And the "great cloud of witnesses," in the Apostles, martyrs, fathers, doctors of the Church, and saints, are always in close communion with us.

This being so, what is the meaning of that heretical saying that "we all worship the same God"? As a truism, indeed, it is so. But in worship, as in other things, there are right and wrong ways. There is God's way, and there is man's way. There are the ways of grace and those of nature. If God has made a revelation, that is to be our way, and our norm. We know indeed that "God is a spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth" (John iv 24). This points to the interior spirit of mind and heart which has to animate all external forms of worship if they are to be worthy of God and acceptable to him; for the heart and inner spirit it is that God desires and commands above all. Indeed, outside without inside is *hollowness*. Thus S Basil speaks of the *hollow blessedness* which he found at Athens. Nor will any amount of fair externals in religion avail us, unless we have the right spirit within. Thus our Lord tells us: "*First make clean the inside* of the cup and platter, that the outside may become clean," and he condemns those who honour him with their lips, but their heart is far from him (Matt. xv 8). As S Paul also tells us, without the inner spirit of charity the grandest externals are as "a sounding brass and tinkling cymbal."

All this to tell us that outer forms without inner spirit will never be sufficient. But granted the right spirit within, it is according to the will of

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the Creator that his creatures should give him their external homage also by all the proper forms and ceremonies which he himself prescribed, immediately to Moses in the old law, and through the living voice of his Church in the Christian dispensation. Let us remember that the old law was a shadow of the good things to come. Thus God's command to the people of old, through Moses: "Keep the precepts of the Lord thy God, and the testimonies and ceremonies which he hath commanded thee. You shall not go aside to the right hand or the left. But you shall walk in the way the Lord hath commanded" (Deut. v and vi). Now, "if that which is done away was glorious, much more that which remaineth is in glory" (2 Cor. iii 11). The Church of the living God is with us, ever living, expanding, developing, and unfolding the divine truth and will to the nations. We never want (*more hæretico*) to argue from the primitive to the present, or the present to the primitive, because the Church is the home of the spirit of God on earth, and her children are ever "taught of God." Our Lord is in our midst. The holy sacrifice and the divine offices of the Church are ascending to the Creator from the rising of the sun to the going down thereof. These are the beauteous externals of the Church's perpetual worship, and they all bespeak the will of God to be done, from a genuflection to a drop of holy water. Let them all be informed and animated by the Spirit of God and his divine charity, thus will the charity of God be poured forth in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, who is given to us (Rom. v 5). This is the worship of

the Holy Catholic Church, external and internal, divinely beautiful and soul-satisfying, and it tells us that all along the line our Lord God is intimately with us, and we must be there with him—never listening to "the profane novelties of words, and oppositions of knowledge, falsely so called" (1 Tim. vi 20).

VIII

GOD AND HIS CREATURES

"ALL men are vain, in whom there is not the knowledge of God; and who, by these good things that are seen, cannot understand him that is. . . . Let them know how much the Lord of them is more beautiful than they: for the first author of beauty made all those things. . . . For by the greatness of the beauty, and of the creature, the Creator of them may be seen, so as to be known thereby" (Wisd. xiii 1-5). Here we have God's own assured word that we may learn something of the wisdom, power, beauty, and love of the Creator by the greatness and beauty of the works of his creation. The whole universe around us is a revelation of God to his creatures, bespeaking his immensity and infinity, his greatness and goodness, and telling man that he is a dependent being, with the duty of honouring, loving, serving, and obeying his Creator. All this is arrived at by the natural workings of man's reason and senses combined, and it begets the duty of *natural religion*, which men in the nature of things owe to their Creator. This is prior to *revealed* religion, which is God's spoken word to his creatures, embodying all those truths declared by him, first to the patriarchs, then by the Mosaic law, afterwards by the Incarnation of his divine Son, and through him to his Church till

the end of time. The inspired Apostle teaches the same as the wise man of old: "The invisible things of God, from the creation of the world, are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made; his eternal power also, and divinity: so that they are inexcusable, because that, when they knew God, they have not glorified him; but became vain in their thoughts, and their heart was darkened" (Rom. i 20, 21). Here we see that divine things are "clearly seen" and "understood" by the things that are made, even God's own "eternal power and divinity." From all this knowledge of God, gained by "the things that are made," natural religion follows, or ought to follow; otherwise, as S Paul says, men are "inexcusable," because, knowing God, they do not glorify him. With this they become "vain," and their hearts are "darkened." Seeing, however, as the Angelic Doctor teaches, that many such truths may be known comparatively to few, and after a long time and with the admixture of many errors, the revelation of God's spoken words becomes necessary, for the sake of securing man's salvation more surely and fitly. Thus, "over and above natural knowledge, built up by reason, it is necessary that there should be a sacred science, learnt through revelation. And such truths, above reason, once revealed by God, have to be accepted by faith." "For many things are shown to thee above the understanding of man" (Ecclus. iii 25). Such is the teaching of S Thomas in the very first article of the *Summa*.

In communicating with his creatures in this world here below, it will be seen that our Lord God

adapts himself to the conditions of our poor frail nature. He is in one mode of existence, and we entirely in another. He has not a mind like ours; he does not occupy space; he does not move or change his place; he does not progress through time. Yesterday, to-day, and to-morrow, are all one with him. He is not here and there, then and now—he just *is*—the infinitely great, the infinitely wise, the infinitely good, the infinitely powerful, the infinitely loving. His thoughts and his ways are not only *higher* but *other* than ours, in the very nature of things. He is spirit, intelligence, and love, and he has made man in some way like to himself, by his being spiritual, intelligent, and loving; but he has encased these wonderful powers of man in bodies of flesh, and made the workings of them dependent on the laws of the flesh. Then, looking not only at man, but at the entire universe around and above us, we see that, as a fact, the pure spirit of the Deity has expressed itself in *matter*. By doing so, God binds himself to use material things in communicating himself to mankind. Therefore, whenever angels have appeared to men, as to Abraham, Jacob, Daniel, Tobias, our blessed Lady, and so many others, they have assumed bodily forms, probably by their own power, given to them by God, and so communicated with men by their sensible presence and language. So it has been with God himself. "No man shall see God, and live." But our Lord God clothes his presence with some material form, and so speaks to his creatures, as he did to our first parents, who "heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden"

—as he spoke to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Samuel, Elias, Isaias, Jeremias, and the prophets. Then, more than all, by the Incarnation of our Lord God himself does he come to his creatures, carrying out his own law more completely than before of adapting himself utterly and entirely to our material conditions. *Verbum caro factum est* —not now merely accommodating himself to our human laws, but *becoming* material and human, by adding these qualities to his spiritual and divine nature. So it is in our Lord's Incarnation and in his sacramental and sacrificial life in our midst—for both are the same, God with his creatures. "His name shall be called Emmanuel, God with us" (Matt. i 23). Let none, therefore, complain of these present conditions. God and man are infinitely apart, and God has condescended to man by coming to the material level. In this he has acted by his law of *gradation*—first in the creation, by expressing himself in matter. And how vastly and immeasurably has he done so. Look at all these chains of superb mountains in our world, the vast ocean, and the dashing cataracts. Astronomers tell us that the mountains in the moon are the height of our Himalayas! Then the immense, astonishing size of our sun and of the innumerable heavenly bodies that we see so many billions of miles away. Our sun's diameter is 860,000 miles, while that of our earth is under 8,000. The distance of Sirius is computed at seventy billions of miles, and others far more than that—all this is to tell us of God's wondrous plan in proceeding from the life of eternal spirit to the creation of things material. Such is

his will; and as man here below belongs to the material world, and his spirit is enclosed in matter, so God, communicating with him, works with him in the same terms. And it follows that religion must be in the same plane of existence as we, and not as God. And thus we come again to Bethlehem, Nazareth, and the Tabernacle—all the same: God with his creatures, and accommodating himself to the laws, the workings, and the aspirations of human nature. We are nothing apart from him, for he is all in all; but he comes to our level, for we cannot rise to his. It is wonderful for him to come to us, and on our level too. Let us not ask, What of the crib? What of the workshop? What of the Cross? What of the Tabernacle? His will is the rule of life—that is all. We might ask why he made matter at all, seeing he is pure spirit. If there is mystery in one, there is mystery in another. A mystery or two more makes no difference to the transcendent Creator. If he works in matter once, he may multiply his works a thousand times in ten thousand different ways. If all things were made by the Father, through the Son, "from whom, through whom, in whom are all things," he may multiply his presence in all the ciboria of the world. It is wonderful indeed, but, let us say, not to be wondered at, because God has made man for himself, and he wills to train him here below for his future life of everlasting union with himself in heaven. And what can be more fitting and more loving than to begin this life of friendship here below? Yet, for our sakes, it has to be on the level of material laws. Therefore our Lord chooses

bread, wine, water, oil, ciborium, tabernacle, altar, and priests of human kind. He himself is always the first of priests—emphatically "the Priest for ever." He it is who, through his own divine power, baptizes, consecrates, and absolves, yet planning to do all through the agency of his priests of earth, in union with himself: for such is God's universal law, in nature and grace, to give us his good things through the hands of his creatures, as our very life itself comes from him through the human father and mother, light through the sun, breath through the air, food through the earth, and all the rest. And in the same way, providing for the spiritual needs of the world, he makes his Church *a divine institution and authority,* representing himself, his presence, and work, among the children of men till the end of the world—all this of human material, yet informed with his divine Spirit—his messenger and teacher here below through all the ages. To this living, human, divine, mystical personality and power, he commits his life and his message to the end of time. As human in its *outer works,* it will have the weakness of humanity in its ministrations. As divine in its *inner spirit,* it will be governed by infallible truth and grace. Its working is through the teaching authority, the sacraments, and the word of God to the people, and through our Lord himself in his sacramental and sacrificial life, from the rising of the sun to the going down of the same—our Lord and his Church ever in concert together, he and his priests ever in union, for God's own great ends and the vast needs of souls—ever together in the

daily Mass, the divine office, mental prayer, and the work of souls—baptizing together, consecrating together, absolving together, and giving the word of God to the people together. Thus throughout our Lord's work and the Church's work along the ages we have the blending of the human and the divine, the material and the spiritual, our Lord and his Church ever united together. How would it be for the world and for the souls of men otherwise than this? Where would the best of men here below be without the head of angels and of men in their midst? Our Lord's words are ever before us: "No man cometh to the Father but by me" (John xiv 6). All the saints together would be nothing, and powerless to help us, without our Lord, but with him we can do all things. Where, then, would the world be without the Church and without our Lord's sacramental and sacrificial life in her midst? Let us say it again: Our Lord has committed his life and his message to his Church; and he and the Church are together, and he and his priests are together; and the priests give of their spiritual goods to the people, and the people give of their temporal goods to the priests; and so the needs of all, spiritual and temporal, are provided for—the dependence on God and on one another, all working together for the exercise and development of the twofold law of charity, the love of God and the love of our neighbour.

It is wonderful in all this how much the transcendent God commits to men. It is as though he *would* have man's co-operation with himself in both the orders of nature and grace—God in all

the first worker, man the secondary cause, and all for the love of God and man together. But if it is not unworthy of God to have made material things, it is not unworthy of him to use them. Besides this, men are to become "partakers of the divine nature" (2 Pet. i 4), so that while we carry our treasures in earthen vessels, walking by faith, and not by sight, to the ultimate end, we have to train ourselves to the divine beholdings even now. And thus the Church militant on earth becomes a reflection of the Church triumphant in heaven. "I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God. . . . And I heard a voice from the throne, saying: Behold the tabernacle of God with men, and he will dwell with them. And they shall be his people; and God himself with them shall be their God" (Apoc. xxi 2-3).

IX

A COHERENT SPIRITUAL LIFE

IT was Father Hugh Benson's opinion that all should have a coherent spiritual life—that is, an inner life of tendency to God, clear, consistent, and continued, and using practically the necessary means to the end. The word "coherent" is opposed to that which is desultory. Desultory spirituality is perpetually going from one thing to another, and is well compared to the waves of the sea, always rising and falling, but never acquiring consistency. No doubt this particular quality of soul is largely fostered by living habitually in a worldly atmosphere. Here it is always like the waves of the sea—rising by a little excitement, falling when this finishes; further risings of passing pleasure, falling again to restless dissatisfaction. So it is, and always will be, when the heart is not given to its proper object.

That such a little scheme as is here given might, could, would, and should be adopted by all well-willed souls, follows from clearly realizing the *de facto* state of the case—that is, that we are here to prepare and provide for our future life. God's grace puts us into due position for this. This is the only title that we have for attaining to the kingdom of heaven. The supernatural *end* requires supernatural *means* to gain it. Grace is glory

begun, and glory is grace perfected. This gift of grace, as the Church teaches, is first infused into the soul at baptism, which is the new birth to the soul—the birth to the divine and supernatural life, as our Lord says: "Unless a man be born again, he cannot enter the kingdom of God." This life of grace remains within every soul that does not consent to deadly sin; even if it does so fall, grace may be recovered through the sacrament of penance. But grace is the indispensable condition for the salvation of the soul, because it places us in a state of favour and friendship with God, through the efficacy of the merits of Jesus Christ. It is, further, the teaching of the Catholic Church that grace always implies and connotes the three theological virtues of faith, hope, and charity, so that when grace is infused, they are infused. It is quite in the nature of the case that it should be so, as we may observe in the natural order. Friendship between two souls always implies that they believe, trust, and love one another; if these qualities are not there, neither is friendship there. So, if man does not believe, trust, and love God, he cannot be in the state of favour and friendship with him, which is the meaning of grace. Therefore, grace always includes faith, hope, and charity.

Let it be well remembered that these virtues are the powers of the life of grace, just in the same way that our nature has her three powers of intellect, memory, and will. Now, what we do for nature we ought to do for grace. The powers of nature are for the present life, the powers of grace for the future life. We take care of our

natural powers, we must take care of the spiritual powers. We use the powers of nature, we must use the powers of grace. We cultivate the natural, we must cultivate the spiritual. The laws of nature and grace run in close parallels here. The law is: use a power and it strengthens, neglect to use it and it weakens. Does not the memory strengthen by use? Does not the intellect develop by study? And so of all the other natural powers. Fingers and feet grow strong by exercise. It is exactly the same thing with the great spiritual powers of grace. Be a man of faith, submit the intellect to God's revelation, and the authority of his Church, and your faith, and intellect with it, grow stronger and stronger, and you enjoy through life God's twofold light—the light of reason and the light of faith. Reason gives you natural religion, and faith revealed religion, and you then serve your Creator by nature and grace together, and they act and react on one another, keeping the mind ever quiet, contented, and happy, on account of the subjection of the creature to the Creator, both in its natural and spiritual powers. All this supplies strength to the next great spiritual power of hope, by which man ever trusts himself and all he has, and does, and will have, and will do, to the goodness of God and the merits of Jesus Christ. This enables him to make his life a constant spiritual progress to his last end; and he is taught to "forget the things that are behind, and stretch forth to those that are before, and so press towards the mark" (Phil. iii 13). This exercise of hope and spiritual progress keeps the soul in a constant remembrance of the

divine presence, which is such a potent factor in the work of spiritual perfection. All this directly acts on the third great virtue of charity, which is the love of God above all things, and this overflowing in love to our neighbour. It must never be forgotten that this love of charity is what God above all things desires and commands. Such is his will both in the old and new law, and it stands to the end as the "greatest and first commandment." It is love above all things that strengthens with use and exercise. How clear is this in the natural order. You love music, and by practising it, you love it more and more. Look at vocalists, at actresses, at linguists—see how the love of singing, of acting, of speaking in different languages, grows within them. Observe travellers and mountaineers: they love their work more and more, and ability develops with practice. It ought to be the same with the love of God above all things, and this overflowing in love to our neighbour. If it is not so, it is because we do not use sufficiently our higher love of charity. The power is there within us, the infused virtue, but it does not develop, because it is allowed to lie idle, and the lower love of nature is used instead. We learn this from philosophy as well as theology, that whenever we act deliberately we act from love; and if it is not the higher love, it will be the lower. If the higher love is not exercised, it weakens from disuse. Then, when a strong temptation against grace comes, the soul is conquered. Whereas a strong love would have gained the victory, as even Virgil says: *Omnia vincit amor*. But the lower love, natural love, self-love,

from being indulged, gets stronger and stronger. And thus, as Shakespeare says, it is a matter of "war 'twixt will and will not." The different movements of nature and grace are drawn out by the author of the *Imitation of Christ* (Book III, chaps. 54 and 55).

The three great powers of grace, faith, hope, and charity, each do their work in the sanctification and perfection of the soul. Faith is the illuminating power, showing us what to believe and what to do, for we can hardly expect to go the way if we do not know it. Hope is the aspiring power, looking to God as the last end of all things, and progressing to him by constant advance. Charity is the loving and moving power animating the soul with the love of God above all things, and this overflowing in love to our neighbour. Hence charity is the life and form of all other virtues—the virtue of all perfection, and the perfection of all virtue, as S Francis de Sales says; so much so that without it, as S Paul says, the grandest externals become as "a sounding brass and tinkling cymbal." The reason of this is that charity unites with God, but all the other virtues without it will not do so. Practically, therefore, a "coherent spiritual life" is the life of grace maintained and never lost, exercising itself consistently by faith, hope, and charity—understanding that charity contains faith, hope, and all other virtues; as S Paul says: "Charity believeth all things, hopeth all things, never falleth away," etc., and therefore should be the loving and moving power in all the works of life, according to

the teaching of the Angelic Doctor: ". . . *Caritas est forma virtutum . . . et principium omnium bonorum operum quæ in finem ultimum ordinari potest*" (II-II, Q. 23, Art. viii, and I-II, Q. 65, Art. iii).

X

TO HIM THAT SHALL OVERCOME

WARFARE here below, whether in the natural or spiritual order, seems to be an inevitable accompaniment of human life, ordained, maybe, by the all-wise rulings of Providence to hinder over-attachment to the vanities of earthly life, with a view of attaining more securely the ultimate end for which men are destined. In olden times the Jews were the chosen people of God, but their history, as recorded in the Old Testament, is a presentment of long and oft-repeated conflicts, sometimes with other nations, sometimes with themselves, even to the resisting of Moses and the prophets. And as to spiritual warfare, it began with our first parents, and, we may say, has been going on among the children of men ever since. How much was Christ our Lord resisted; how much is God himself resisted! How much has the Catholic Church been resisted these eighteen hundred years! "If they have persecuted me, they will persecute you." And now all who give themselves to the love and service of God will have to be prepared for the Christian warfare. "Son, when thou comest to the service of God, prepare thyself for temptation." And we are taught by Christian doctrine that our three great enemies are the world, the flesh, and the devil.

All these powers are strong, and in constant war with the children of men. But if anyone is a child of God, by the life of sanctifying grace, with its three great powers of faith, hope, and charity, all three enemies will be in league against him. Meanwhile, "the kingdom of heaven is not to be bought with pleasure," as S Catherine of Siena said. Great rewards are merited by life's great warfare; not only by enduring it, but by constantly battling with the three great enemies, and *overcoming* them. "To him that shall overcome, I will give to sit with me in my throne: as I also have overcome, and am set down with my Father in his throne" (Apoc. iii 21). Here we see that the heavenly rewards are not for the mere battling with, but for the *overcoming* of, our spiritual enemies. Some might say that it is very difficult actually to *overcome* the world, and then the flesh, and the devil also. This would indeed be so if our nature were unassisted by grace, and if grace had not her three great powers of faith, hope, and charity. But as there are degrees in every virtue, it stands to reason that if we do not cultivate our spiritual powers by use and exercise they will hardly be strong enough to serve us effectively when the conflict comes. Thus the world knows well that in times of war great care must be taken to strengthen the city's fortifications and reserves, and to practise every fighting man in the use of arms, and the development of courage, discipline, and strong advance and endurance when the time of battle comes, and all certainly aim at overcoming the enemy. This is not thought too much, and those would be cowards who did not

gird themselves to their objective. All this is quite as true in the spiritual order. Our powers of action and endurance must be well fortified and developed. Is your faith in God and his Holy Church well "grounded, settled, and immovable," to use the Apostle's words? Is your trust in God's goodness and our Lord's merits firm and unflinching? Above all, divine charity, the love of God above all, affective and effective—and this overflowing in love to our neighbour—is this your own very life and moving principle, governing you in all your toils and trials by the Spirit of God himself? If your spiritual powers are all thus well strengthened and refurbished, you will be quite able to cope with all the wiles of the world, the flesh, and the devil. But if otherwise, not. You will be like those who enter upon war unprepared. Prepare for the warfare—better late than never—and remember the divine promise to well-willed souls: "My grace is sufficient for thee." Let all remember that to *each* of our spiritual enemies a strong tower of defence has been given to us. Against the world we have the Church; against the flesh we have the spirit, the Spirit of God, too, within us; against the devil we have Christ our Lord, and his holy Mother with him.

Who will complain that the powers of grace are not superior to those of nature? What are the world's attractions compared with those of the Church? But, here it must be said again, to appreciate the attractions of grace our faith, trust, and love must be up to the proper level. If we allow these divine habits to weaken from want of use

and exercise, we are ourselves to blame; if they become weak, they will not serve us sufficiently. It is like one who lets his habit of music or language weaken by not using it. When asked to play or speak, he is not prepared. And if our spiritual powers weaken, the natural powers strengthen, and grace is not then strong enough to battle against the allurements of the world; and if a soul yields to them, it wants to yield again, because the law of nature is, indulge a propensity, and it strengthens. This applies equally to things good and bad. Therefore, indulge the good things and mortify the bad, and the corresponding habits will strengthen. Love to go to the sacraments and to the holy Mass, and to pray, and to meditate, and to make (from the heart) acts of faith, hope, charity, and contrition, and the habits strengthen with exercise. The life of faith will tell us that all these things are far superior to what the world can offer us. If anyone feel otherwise, it shows that his nature is strong and his grace weak. If this be so, depend upon it, when a strong temptation comes, his habit of virtue is too weak to resist, and he falls. Our Lord tells us this in the parable of the Sower: "In time of temptation they fall away."

Then there is the flesh, as opposed to the spirit; the flesh is part of human nature, but nature has to be in subordination to grace, so the flesh has to be in subordination to the spirit. We must remember that the Spirit of God dwells within every soul in the state of grace. "Know you not that you are the temples of the Holy Ghost, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" The laws of

nature tell us that if we do not wish to be slaves of lower things, we must live according to the higher, and that therefore if the higher love of God within us is in the ascendancy, the lower loves of nature will be in submission thereto, as S Paul tells us: "Walk in the spirit, and you shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh." And again: "Be not overcome by evil, but overcome evil by good." S Augustine's teaching is the same—*si adhærebis superiori, conculcabis inferiora* (*Enar.* in Ps. xlv). And Shakespeare also: "A larger burning burns a smaller one." So the larger fire of divine love will consume the smaller fires of self-love. Those, therefore, who indulge natural inclinations in a way to give them the ascendancy will find the higher love losing its sway. Whereas to work *ex principio divino* gives a soul the mastery over its lower appetites. From this we see that although the flesh is a strong enemy in the spiritual warfare, yet the good Spirit given to all in grace is still stronger, and able to keep in due order the wayward workings of the natural man. Then there is the strength of the evil spirit, the arch-enemy of mankind, so active in his wiles among the children of men; but against him we have the head of angels and of men, Jesus Christ our Lord, and with him his blessed Mother and our Mother also. The light, love, and strength of God are therefore on our side. But to enjoy his love and help to the full we have to cultivate the greatest power of sanctifying grace, the virtue of charity, signifying the love of God above all, affective and effective, and this overflowing in love to our neighbour, and working in

a thousand different ways, till we learn to work in all things promptly, easily, and sweetly. Here so many degrees come in: we may have two or three degrees of divine charity, and the saints had a hundred. If our degrees are but low, how shall we have enough power over the enemy, and how will the Spirit of God have sufficient place in our souls to have us in subordination to himself, with all the strength accruing to our souls from our union with him? Certainly, if our spiritual powers are not sufficiently strong, the powers of our spiritual enemies will be arrayed against us. Look into the world, and see how many men, women, and children gradually deflect from the ways of faith, hope, and charity, and little by little lose their hold of the Spirit of God, and then "in time of temptation they fall away." What is to be done in the way of God to have our souls in safety and well fortified against the powers of our spiritual enemies? The first lesson to learn is that acts make habits, and habit it is that defines man's character before God. The best of all habits have been infused into us by the baptismal grace: these are the three theological virtues; but they need development to become strong and serviceable to our spiritual well-being. To increase and strengthen them we must use and exercise them; then the repetition of the act forms the habit. Elicit the acts from the heart, day by day. Live by faith, act by it, never act against it. Our Lord has committed his life and his message to his Church. What an exercise of faith it is to realize this in his sacramental and sacrificial life, thus giving us himself and his teaching *through* his

Church! And all this moves us to hope in him, by tending to him as our last end, loving him with all our hearts, and making his love the moving power and principle in all the works of life, that thus in him we may "live, move, and have our being." In this way the three great virtues, uniting men with God, little by little, develop in life and power, and the Spirit of God becomes the spirit of all our outer works; for he it is who diffuses the virtues in our souls; as S Paul says: "The charity of God is poured forth in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, who is given to us" (Rom. v 5). And the charity of God always includes faith and hope, as the Apostle again says: "Charity believeth all things, hopeth all things" (1 Cor. xiii 7). Thus, by the maintenance of sanctifying grace within the soul, and the growing and developing strength of its three great powers of faith, hope, and charity, we are fully proof against the ways of the world, the wars of the flesh, and the wiles of the devil. And all this because we have not been overcome by evil, but have overcome evil by good. And "to him that shall overcome, I will give to sit with me in my throne: as I also have overcome, and am set with my Father in his throne" (Apoc. iii 21).

XI

THE MAN, THE BEAST, THE DIVINE

LOOKING at all the good and all the bad we find around us here below, and the same, indeed, in the long history of mankind from the beginning, we are apt to be puzzled and perplexed at the vast differences of individuals, all possessing the same human nature, yet all working in such different ways, either for good or bad. Some begin good and change into bad. Others, contrariwise, from bad change to good, as though at different times they were under different influences or drawings, whether of the good spirit, the evil spirit, or the perverted human spirit. Such are the ways of men, with the will-power that God has given to them. Man, indeed, *ought* to train himself to good, and ought to change whenever he goes wrong. He is not forced to bad, nor forced to good; but his will-power is there, given to him to serve his Creator freely, willingly, and lovingly, and God's grace is there to help him, and he ought to know the words of our Lord to S Paul: "My grace is sufficient for thee."

Sometimes a word or two, or a distinction in words, will make an obscure matter plain. If we distinguish between nature and grace, and say such things are of nature, others of grace, our views begin at once to be clearer. Looking at all the good and all the evil in the world, let us choose

three words by which to understand them. The three words are: the Man, the Beast, the Divine. The Man is known by right reason and will-power. The Beast denotes the irregular doings of the flesh by intemperance and impurity. The Divine is the infused gift of grace grafted on the natural man, with its three spiritual powers of faith, hope, and charity.

Reason and will, which are God's own gifts to man in the natural order, can achieve many noble works. They can rise to the Creator by knowledge and love; they can infer his greatness, goodness, wisdom, power, and love, and the consequent duties of loving, serving, and obeying him. All this will lead to the practical working of natural religion; and from the knowledge of God man easily proceeds to the knowledge of himself and of human nature generally. And as the Creator associates man with himself in the governance of the world, placing him over the works of his hands, so God, as the *Agens principale,* and man, as the secondary cause, work together in a thousand different ways, for God's own glory and the benefit of mankind. The pity is—and we see it all around us—that men use their powers independently of the God who gave them, and acts make habits, and habits the character. Thus they deflect from the divine purpose, and, of course, rue the consequences. By neglecting the higher love, it cools within them, and gradually brings them into spiritual tepidity. Then the lower loves of nature and the flesh assert themselves, for love of some sort *must* move us to all our deliberate acts.

If it is not the higher love, it will be the lower—and here the *beast* begins to show himself. Greedy self-seeking is the first degree of intemperance. It moves to the lower likings and desires of the flesh. It soon becomes inordinate, and passes on from smaller things to bigger: for nature's law is, indulge a propensity, and you strengthen it. The *man* should rise up here and control the *beast,* and the evil may be nipped in the bud. Men govern their horses and dogs, and even stronger beasts than these. Why do they leave the beast within them to go his own way? Anger, hatred, envy, jealousy, quarrellings and bickerings, spitefulness and resentment—all these are of the *beast,* and if left ungoverned they grow with his growth and strengthen with his strength. Excess in eating and drinking are also of the *beast,* and if not arrested by the *man* develop into gluttony. But the *man* may, and should, use his will-power to hinder inordination, bringing all such natural uses under the influence of right reason, and so keeping them all *in ordine ad finem.* All other unreasonable desires and movements may be reckoned as the offshoots of intemperance in its largest sense, as being against the virtue of moderation, whether of the tongue or any of the other senses.

The vice of impurity is a many-headed monster, of which it may be said *crescit indulgens.* But it is well brought under by two uses—(1) nipping the thought in the bud; (2) engaging the thoughts and likings with higher and better things; as S Paul says: "Walk in the spirit, and you shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh" (Gal. v 16). S Augustine

also: *Si adhærebis superiori, conculcabis inferiora* (*Enar.* in Ps. xlv). This may be called the specific remedy for the vice. All through life thoughts and affections will be, must be, active. If we do not secure them for higher things, they necessarily fall on the lower, seeing that it is impossible to live without thinking and loving. Does not Shakespeare also say the same? "One fire burns out another's burning." Turn to the infinitely great, good, and loving God, the source of all that is beautiful in nature, grace, and glory, and his knowledge and love are soul-satisfying to the full. The perishable gratifications of the flesh are then subdued to the spirit. This is not living without love, but living with the highest love. And it grows with our growth, and strengthens with our strength. But now we are coming to the *divine* in man—the life of grace, with its three great powers of faith, hope, and charity: this is the presiding, spiritual, and supernatural life in man, and keeps both man and beast in lifelong order. The life of grace is not attained by man himself; it is the gift of God to man, enabling him by faith, trust, and love, to live in the divine favour and friendship here, and attain to everlasting life hereafter; as S Paul says: "By grace you are saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, for it is the gift of God." It is given through the merits of Christ at baptism, when we are "born again" to God—our first birth being that of nature, our second, at baptism, that of grace, making us children of God and inheritors of the kingdom of heaven. Thus we have within us the twofold life, that of nature and

that of grace. Nature has three great powers, and grace three great powers—the powers of nature, intellect, memory, will; the powers of grace, faith, hope, charity—faith believing in God and all his teachings through his Church; hope trusting in his goodness and the all-saving merits of Christ; and charity the loving and the moving power of all the virtues, loving God himself above all things, and this overflowing in love to one another and working in a thousand different ways. It is this highest of all loves which is so supremely satisfying to the soul, which makes life at once "all of a piece," enlarging both mind and heart together, by the knowledge and love of God ever increasing, and by the ceaseless blending together of the contemplative and active elements, rising to the presence of God around, above, within us, then moving in a thousand different ways to the love of our fellow-creatures; for "charity even then rises on high when it descends low, and by descending to the lowest, it rises to the highest," says the great S Gregory (*Past.* ii 5). This precious life of grace, once received, is never lost, except a soul of its own doing forfeits it by deadly sin. Even then in holy Church another sacrament is at hand for its recovery, by confession, contrition, and absolution. Smaller sins, called venial, do not rob the soul of grace, but may be expiated by going straight to God with love and contrition. But as all ought to avoid mortal sin, the mutual love and friendship between the soul and God is thus maintained through life, he loving us, we loving him, he abiding with us, and we with him; he working with us,

and we with him; he enjoying himself with us, and we enjoying ourselves with him. Thus it is that the *divine* within us governs, elevates, and transforms *the man*, and the man the *beast*, and the end of human life, which is union with God by mutual love, and this overflowing in love to one another, is begun here, to be continued in all its perfection of everlasting love hereafter.

XII

OUTER WORKS AND INNER SPIRIT

THE outer works and inner spirit of man's life here below correspond to what philosophers call matter and form. In things inanimate, such as beautiful churches and cathedrals, their material will be stone, their form will be their exquisite shape and design. What we all admire in them so much is, not the stone of which they are made, but the use to which the stone has been turned, with all the science, art, care, enthusiasm, and finish that have been given to the perfect work.

When we come to living and rational nature, the body with all our outer works will be the *material* of our lives, and the soul, with its inner life and principle of action, our *form*. But here we must distinguish. There is the life of nature and the life of grace. Many there are who profess no more than a natural life, having no notion of the supernatural added to the natural by the life of divine faith and love. Now, the *material* of such lives will be their physical powers with all their outer works—things that appear objectively. Their *form* will, of course, be *subjective*—viz., their inner soul, with its natural principle of action, for good or for bad, according to the saying of the schools, *unumquodque agit secundum suam formam*. Thus, to exemplify, builders, farmers, doctors, nurses, rail-

waymen—their externals make the *material* of their lives, diversified by the diversity of states, conditions, and works. That which gives the *form* to their lives will be their inner spirit and principle, giving also to each, living a naturally good life, the natural spirit of his state, according to which the builder loves his art, the farmer his fields, the doctor his science, the nurse her careful work, the railwaymen the management of their vast systems of travel, with all its details. All this is nature—it is not grace. And the inner forms of nature may be good or may be bad, according to the voluntary principle chosen, the inner principles moving to outward acts, good or bad. Thus, *bonum et malum ex objecto*. But now the soul, or living spirit in man, may be *reinformed* with divine life—viz., the life of grace, God's own gift, the supernatural added to the natural, with a view of enabling man to attain to his supernatural and divine end, seeing that the means have to be proportioned to the end—the end God himself, and the means divine. This gift of divine grace, as the Church tells us, is infused into man's soul by baptism, the first of the sacraments, thus bringing our Lord's merits straight into man's soul; as S Paul says: "By grace you are saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves, for it is the gift of God" (Eph. ii. 8). This life of grace has three spiritual powers through which it lives and works spiritually, just as the life of nature has three natural powers, through which it lives and works naturally. The three powers of nature are memory, intellect, and will; the three powers of grace—faith, hope, and charity. As nature sees natural things

with the intellect, and loves and moves to them with the will, so grace sees divine things by faith, and loves and moves to them by charity. Thus we see in the baptized soul the twofold life, that of nature and that of grace—the one tends to natural, the other to spiritual things; the one is human, the other divine. Hence the conflict of life here below, and the ascendancy obtained by one or the other. To use a power is to strengthen it. Indulge the natural powers, and they strengthen; cultivate the spiritual powers, and they develop. We cannot serve two masters. The divine plan is for the spiritual to govern, and the natural to obey. "If by the spirit you mortify the deeds of the flesh, you shall live" (Rom. viii 13). From this we see that the soul's highest form is determined by its supernatural life of faith, hope, and charity, grace thus becoming the form and vivifying principle to nature. And as among the powers of grace Charity is, as the Angelic Doctor says, *excellentissima virtutum,* as being the bond of union with God and the spring of spiritual action, so it is named by the saint as the *forma virtutum* (II-II, Q. 23, Arts. vi and viii). Thus, if we want the best and highest life on earth, whatever the material of our lives may be —this is accidental—charity has to be our *form,* taking charity now in its largest and truest sense, as the theological virtue, signifying the love of God above all things, overflowing in love to our neighbour, and working in a thousand different ways. Nor is it to be considered a difficult thing to make charity the *form* of our virtues, because, as already said, it is an infused virtue, therefore always resi-

dent in every soul in grace—resident in the soul like faith and hope. Every practical Catholic is ready to live up to his faith and trust in God. He goes to the sacraments and to the holy Mass, maintains his faith, defends it, acts up to it, and never acts against it. It is his spiritual light, showing him through life what to believe and what to do. In things of faith he is governed by the Spirit of God, not by his natural man. Faith is one of the spiritual powers of grace—he has it, and uses it. In like manner, charity is another spiritual power—the loving and the moving power in spiritual life. Every good child of the Church may and should use this greatest of spiritual powers. It is merely a matter of using what we have; and if we use it not, we fall upon the lower love, and easily go wrong. Were we told that to find charity we should have to go to the East or cross to the West, we might plead the difficulty and inability of doing the thing. But when we are told "The thing is *within* you," where is the difficulty? We only have to use what we have within us. It is like a little music within us. Use it, and it gathers power by exercise; neglect it, and it declines. So, use your charity, and it strengthens. The more we love, the more able we are to love, and the easier it is to love, seeing, as the *Imitation* says, that "nothing is sweeter than love." But if you neglect your charity and fall back upon your lower love, remember that acts make habits, and that to indulge a propensity is to strengthen it, and that to neglect to use a great power is to weaken it.

Some are very much drawn to life's grand

externals. We have seen that the externals of life appertain to its *material,* not to its *form,* and we have seen that it is the *form* that gives the beauty and value to the soul. Will anyone doubt this? Who teaches it more sublimely and emphatically than S Paul? Which of us would dare to say half of what he says as to the difference between *matter* and *form?* He enumerates the greatest externals of any possible or impossible life to be imagined, and declares that without the inner *form* they are as "a sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal"; that they are nothing, nothing, and profit a man nothing—that is, in the spiritual order, before God and heaven. Yes, even though he should have "all knowledge." And are there not many who strive for knowledge more than for charity? Even "faith to remove mountains" will not do. Nor "giving all our goods to the poor," which would be secondary charity without the primary. Nor even speaking "with the tongues of men and angels," which, without the *divine form* of charity, would bring us to the sounding brass and tinkling cymbal. Is it not futile and pitiable to be contented with so little, when God has infinite treasure to bestow? The good Spirit, indeed, never compels anyone to holiness of form. Man is ever free. If he voluntarily chooses the bad, it is his own doing, and badness becomes his form. His mind is bad by bad thoughts, his will is bad by bad love, and bad love leads to bad acts, because *operatio sequitur esse.* If he will, he may reform. Will-power can do it, and he may get to a naturally good life. If he be a child of the Church, having the

baptismal gift within him, will-power and grace together will restore him, and he may renew his form. His intellect is already informed by faith, but his will went wrong. It left the love of God, and turned to evil love. Now he is converted, and therefore reformed. Our Lord's merits reinstate his soul by the sacraments of the Church, and his will and heart are reinformed by the return of hope and love. Charity, again, as the highest power of grace, becomes the spiritual form of his outer works, moving him to the love of God above all, overflowing to love of one another, premising that the natural man is kept in due order. Happy soul, because of its beautiful form! Its happiness is from within, but its love works outwardly in a thousand different ways.

Although much of this subject of matter and form may seem to be over-philosophical and abstruse, yet to reflective minds it will be solid truth, leading to very practical results. It will lead earnest souls to be a little less troubled about the *outer materials* of life, provided their inner spirit is good. Thus it has been well said that "provided a soul maintains its life of faith and love divine, the mode of its employment is but an *accident*." This will remind us of the teaching of S Thomas and S Francis de Sales, that a small work done with great love is more meritorious than a great work done with small love. Further, it will help every well-willed soul to be content with his state and condition of life, seeing that externals are but accidentals, and that it is the inner spirit and form that matter. Contentedness, equability, equanimity

—such delightful qualities in a virtuous life—will follow naturally, as fruits follow from the tree.

If the thoughts that engender these principles are not so easily grasped and formed, this comes from a want of practice and self-training. But it can be remedied by will-power and grace. Is it not strange that so many are found with will-power for the things of nature, yet not for those of grace? Even Marcus Aurelius tells us that "there is a proper dignity and proportion to be observed in every act of life" (*Med.* iv 32). And Seneca: "A wise man carries a divine mind through all the externals of life" (*Vit. Beat.*, 16). And the Angelic Doctor, treating of life's highest moving power, divine charity, says that, "ordering man, as it does, to his last end, eternal beatitude, it becomes the principle of all good works referable to that end," and "the *form* of all the virtues in the spiritual order" (I-II, Q. 65, Art. iii, and II-II, Q. 23, Art. viii).

XIII

THE VIRGIN MOTHER OF OUR REDEEMER

Virgin and mother of our dear Redeemer,
All hearts are touched and softened at her name.
LONGFELLOW.

OUR Lord God is wonderful in all the works of his hands, in nature, grace, and glory. All things great, good, and beautiful come from him. But he puts more of his beauty, power, and loveliness in some creatures than in others. There is more charm in a flower than in a stone, more in a superb mountain range than in the rough roads and plains. So in the order of grace saints differ from saints, as star differs from star in glory. The patriarchs, prophets, apostles, fathers, doctors, missionaries, and virgins all declare the glory of God and show forth the works of his hands, being the recipients in many different ways of his wisdom, beauty, power, and love. God is the only good—as our Lord says, "None is good but God alone"—but his goodness diffuses itself, distributing his gifts according to his wisdom and will, and putting more of himself in some than in others. Thus, all creatures declare the glory of the Creator, showing forth his riches, power, and love in a thousand times ten thousand different ways, each in his own

degree, according to the divine plan and good pleasure.

Now, here the unique beauty of our blessed Lady is before us. In the realms of grace and glory, she shows forth the marvels of divine wisdom, power, and loveliness in a way which is exclusively her own, and quite incommunicable to any other creature—where the saints of God in whom he is so wonderful, and the highest of the angelic choirs, cannot approach her transcendent glories, *on account of* her nearness to, and close contact with, God made man, and all the divine virtue that went forth therefrom and thereby into her soul and body, every day, hour, and moment of her divine motherhood.

Who is not struck to the heart by the language of the Angel Gabriel to Mary? See the contrast in his speech to her and to Zachary a short time before, both recorded in S Luke's first chapter. Strangely enough, both Zachary and Mary asked the same question of the angel, viz., "How can this be?" To Zachary Gabriel foretold the birth of S John the Baptist, to Mary the birth of Christ. Both felt their difficulties. Zachary was old, and his wife barren. And Mary was a virgin. Both, therefore, represented themselves to Gabriel. Now note the difference. "Thou shalt be dumb, because thou hast not believed my word," was the angel's reply to Zachary. But to Mary how different! What homage! what profound reverence! "Hail, full of grace." And then the explanation is given in language altogether divine: "The Holy Ghost shall come down upon thee, the power of the Most

High shall overshadow thee, and the Holy that is born of thee shall be called the Son of God." Here we have Mary's own unique relation to the three Persons of the Blessed Trinity declared to her by the angel messenger from heaven: "The power of the Most High shall overshadow thee"—God the Father. "The Holy that is born of thee shall be called the Son of God"—God the Son. "The Holy Ghost shall come down upon thee"—God the Holy Ghost. "The gifts and the calling of God are without repentance" (Rom. xi 29). What Mary was made by God she remains for ever—the Mother of God, and in wondrous relationship to the eternal Trinity; the second Eve, the model and the perfect woman, immaculate from the first; and the spiritual Mother of the human race.

What virtue went forth from the looks and touches of our Lord, as recorded in the Gospel! When Simon was brought to our Lord, Jesus *looked* upon him, and said, "Thou shalt be called Peter." How much was that look of our Lord! Another said: "Master, I beseech thee, *look* upon my son." And of a man who knelt before him it is said: "Jesus, looking on him, loved him." S John the Evangelist is represented by a poet as saying: "He looked upon my soul, and lighted it for ever."

What about the touch of our blessed Lord? What a priceless grace to a soul is the touch of God! Isaias was touched. Jeremias was touched. Daniel was touched. The leper was touched. Our Lord touched the blind, and immediately they saw. The sick were brought, and as many as touched him

were made whole. The woman touched his garment, and was healed. Our Lord saw that virtue had gone forth from him. And they brought him little children, that "he might touch them."

Now to return to the Virgin Mother of our dear Redeemer. Who can imagine all the sweet looks and all the close touches that he gave to her? For others we have seen that one look and one touch was sufficient. Isaias had but one touch from a seraph, and his sins were taken away. A touch from a seraph and a touch from our Lord. Only one touch, and the soul is healed, and the body too, as in the leper and the woman who touched his garment. Oh what of the Virgin Mother of our dear Redeemer? Ah! the tongues of men and of angels cannot declare it. Our Lord God decreed to have a human Mother! He need not have done so. As he formed the first Adam and Eve himself, he might—we should have thought indeed he would—have formed his sacred humanity by his own immediate power. A single *fiat* would have done it. But the wisdom and the will of Heaven ordained a human Mother, so that the manhood and womanhood of our nature might stand once more in all their dignity before God. Our Lord the representative man, our Lady the representative woman. Nothing of sin must come into this divine plan. No admixture of the devil must be there. Hence the Church's definition of our Lady's immaculate conception. The Son's glory is reflected on the Mother, and the Mother's glory on the Son. The flesh of the God-Man was the flesh of Mary. The precious blood that washed away the sins of the

world flowed from the veins of the Virgin Mother. Jesus was truly the Son of Mary, as truly as he was the Son of the Father from all eternity. Therefore Mary, bearing him within, was the city of God and the tabernacle of the Most High. "Glorious things are said of thee, O city of God." What about the touch of a seraph? What about the touch of Jesus? Here is our loving Redeemer in ceaseless contact with his Mother every day, hour, and moment. Oh the virtue of the divinity and the humanity with their uninterrupted flowings into her soul and body! When our Lord was an infant on her bosom, who can reckon the looks that he gave his chosen Mother? Who can tell the oft-repeated embraces that he gave her? It was all part of the divine choice in decreeing to have a human Mother. But the truth is there—virtue was perpetually going forth from the divine Son to the Mother. Can there possibly be in such a one the smallest opening for sin? Hence her immaculate conception; hence her sinlessness through life, according to the Church's word in the Council of Trent.

Our Lord *could* make her sinless—therefore he did so. Who would deny such a conclusion from that single premiss? The Church holds it—therefore it is true. Our Lord's *word* and the Church's *word* are the foundation of all our faith, hope, and charity. Let us think with our Lord, and let us think with his Church, and we shall be right. The honour we give to our blessed Lady is but small, because we are so small ourselves. It is our Lord God who honours her so much. He chose her when he

might have done without her. He elected to have her as his Mother in the scheme of his Incarnation, with all that it meant in his earthly life, with all it means in the Church on earth, and all it will mean in the everlasting life to come. We are all in relation to our Creator, and therefore ought to love him with all our heart, soul, and strength. The Virgin Mother, among all creatures, stands in singular relationship to each person of the Holy Trinity. And as we give them one by one our life-long and everlasting homage, love, and service, as the *Alpha* and *Omega,* the beginning and the end, so it is our joy to look from the Creator to the most perfect of his creatures, and to follow him who is the perfect and the model man in the honour and love he gave her, and which we give, and will give, here and hereafter, to the Virgin Mother of our dear Redeemer, thus following the command of the inspired Apostle, when he says: *Imitatores Dei estote*—"Be ye followers of God, as most dear children" (Eph. v 1).

XIV

SALVATION OUTSIDE THE CHURCH

IT is a fundamental truth of Christianity that our Lord Jesus Christ is the Saviour of mankind, and the one mediator of redemption between God and man. It is therefore through him alone, and through the doing of his will, that we can hope to attain to the everlasting salvation of our souls. Holy Scripture points clearly to the institution of the Catholic Church by our Lord as his own appointed means of communicating his truth and grace to the souls of men. Therefore the *ordinary* means of salvation have been placed by our Lord in his Church. And the Spirit of God came upon her on the day of Pentecost, to dwell within her, teach, guide, animate and govern her, till the end of time. Thus all the members of the Church, living in the state of grace, become recipients of the good Spirit, each one according to his capacity and disposition, each being thus a member of Christ's mystical body, and animated with the divine life of sanctifying grace, working by its spiritual powers of faith, hope, and charity, much as in man's natural life nature works through her natural powers of memory, intellect, and will. Thus the Catholic Church has her body and her soul, the body of the Church being the external visible organism of her head and members, her soul being

the Spirit of God inhabiting her, and animating the members with the life of divine grace, working through the three spiritual powers already named.

The Catholic Church and all her divines tell us that it is by baptism, the first of the sacraments, that each one becomes a member of the mystical body, receiving at the same time through the merits of Christ the good Spirit of God into his soul, with sanctifying grace and its three powers. Thus, all such belong at once to the body and the soul of the Church.

When baptism is received in infancy, the powers of grace, like those of nature, dwell in the soul in germ and passivity, developing gradually at the dawn of reason. The powers of nature then begin to work, and those of grace should begin to work also. Hence it is that Holy Mother Church has such care of her children. Her first lesson to them is, "What must you do to save your soul?" The answer points directly to the use of the powers of grace. "I must worship God by faith, hope, and charity—that is, I must believe in him, hope in him, and love him with my whole heart."

All this bears immediately and directly on every member of the Catholic Church. But we must remember that nowadays a vast number, many thousands and more, are validly baptized outside the pale of the Church. With valid baptism will be the infusion of sanctifying grace and its powers, all in germ, as already said. It is impossible, however, not to admit the inestimable blessing of being children of the true Church, baptized into her body from the first, instead of receiving baptism outside

her visible communion. For the difference between being actually *in* the visible body of the Church, united with her head and members, and being *out* of it, must always be vast and immense. The Catholic Church is the home of the Spirit of God on earth. She is the home of our blessed Lord's sacramental and sacrificial life among the children of men—he with us, and we with him. She is the guardian and teacher of divine truth to the nations; the depository and channel of the riches of divine grace through the sacramental system; the mother of the saints, inviting all her children to a life of holiness and perfection, by the love of God above all, overflowing in love to our neighbour, thus uniting all together in obedience to the same faith and devotion to the same love.

Turning now to the thousands and millions of those who live outside the home of faith and love, the crucial point will always be, Are they outside the Church *through their own fault, knowingly and willingly?* If so, their case is bad, and very bad indeed, because they are living against God's will, who has made his promises to his Church, and given thereto the gifts of his faith and his grace for the salvation of souls. Our Lord's words in the Gospel concerning faith are God's spoken word —"and the truth of the Lord remaineth for ever." So it is with the Athanasian Creed, and with the Church's profession of faith that "out of the Church is no salvation," which, she declares in her science, refers to those who are *culpably* out of the Church. And she further teaches that for grave sin there must always be, not only grave

matter, but full advertence of the intellect and full consent of the will. Therefore, if those outside the Church do not *know* they are outside, and do not *willingly remain* outside, but serve and worship God according to their best knowledge and the dictates of their conscience, although not *de facto* in the *body* of the Church, they belong to her *soul*, and their good faith saves them from mortal sin, and they are reckoned as *material*, not *formal* heretics. Of course, in other ways they may get (like others *in* the Church or *out* of it may get) into grave sins, if they do not take care, and then, indeed, they have not the same chosen means of help as children of the Church have, in the efficacy of the sacraments, to turn their souls again to God. Yet, absolutely speaking, they may turn to God with the inner heart, love him above all, and repent of their sins—as God said to the people of old: "Turn to me, and I will turn to you"; and again: "If with all your hearts ye truly seek me, ye shall surely find me" (*Qui salvos facis rectos corde*). A right heart is everything before God. With this there is his antecedent will "to have all men to be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth" (1 Tim ii 4). And let us observe the tender divine invitation to those without faith: "All the day long have I spread my hands to a people that believeth not, and contradicteth me" (Rom. x 21). Thus it is that God himself wills and works for the salvation of those outside his fold. Nor does he forsake anyone, unless he is first forsaken, as the Vatican Council says. But he gives his grace to each one who does what in him lies.

Let us have these principles from the authoritative voice of the Head of the Church, the successor of S Peter.

Pius IX in an Encyclical to the Italian Bishops, August 10, 1863, thus writes: "It is known to us, and to you, that those who are in invincible ignorance of our holy religion, and who, carefully fulfilling the natural law and the precepts thereof inscribed by God in the hearts of all, being also disposed to obey God and live a good and upright life, can, by the aid of divine light and grace, attain to life eternal." To put the conditions of Pius IX categorically, salvation for those outside the Church may be obtained by (1) invincible ignorance; (2) exercise of good natural religion; (3) readiness to obey God's will; (4) a good and upright life; (5) correspondence with divine light and grace. Invincible ignorance is when the truth of the Catholic religion never enters the mind. Natural religion is the knowledge, love, and service of God attained by the natural lights of reason. The readiness to obey God's will is the disposition to follow the truth as soon as it may be known, and this at any cost. A good and upright life is one that follows the dictates of right reason and conscience. Correspondence with divine light and grace means following up lights and graces as they come, primarily when the Catholic claims assert themselves, at other times by resisting temptations, not "blinking the question," and in matters of faith leaving the private spirit for the authority of the Church, by diffidence in self and confidence in God, etc.

As no two souls are exactly alike, we cannot be easily arguing from one to another. Let it be said, however, that it is not for us to attribute moral fault to intellectual error. There may be causes of delay in conversion, which God knows and we do not. And with so many their hearts are a secret with God. With all this the truth is before us. Our Lord has placed his promises in his Church. This is why no one must knowingly and willingly remain outside her pale. There is always the law of Church communion, and of obedience of the members to the Head. Yet God has nowhere said that his mercies shall not exceed his promises; for "His mercies are above all his works." Thus, the "promises" are in the Church, but outside are the "uncovenanted mercies of God."

"Woe therefore to those who know and slight the covenant."

XV

MAN'S LIFE IN VIEW OF HIS END

CONSIDERING that the Church triumphant in heaven is man's ultimate and everlasting destiny in the world to come, the clear presumption is, that the all-wise, good, and provident God who "reacheth from end to end mightily, and ordereth all things sweetly," would have so arranged that the Church militant here below should be formed, framed, and fitted for the work of preparing and disposing the souls of men during their present life on earth for the distinct end of their creation in the life to come. Thus it is, in the first place, that our Lord God accommodates himself to man's present condition by expressing himself in *matter*, although he himself is pure spirit. The wondrous works of creation, around, above, and within us, all betoken the divine presence, power, goodness, and love, in the material order of things; and thus God deals with man on man's own level, drawing him by this means to the homage of natural religion, which implies the knowledge and love of the Creator, as attained by the natural powers of reason and will, and all this in preparation for the higher gifts of the spiritual order. For as God reveals himself by the wonders and beauties of the natural world, so his plan hereby is to fit and prepare those whom he has formed to his own

image and likeness, for the divine and supernatural gifts and graces of the spiritual world; so that, while the end is supernatural, the means may thus be in due order and proportion thereto.

Beyond God's perpetual revelation of himself to mankind in the vast material and most beautiful works of nature, which are so inviting to contemplation and natural religion, it was to be expected that he, as the loving Friend and Father of his creatures, would come still closer to their level, and speak something of his truth and will to them, in a definite and articulate way—and this especially seeing that natural revelation and religion can be realized and enjoyed by comparatively few, whereas in spiritual things all must be provided for; seeing, further, that such knowledge and practice would require much time for its attainment, and even then be gained with the admixture of many errors; whereas man's whole salvation depends on the knowledge, love, and service of his Creator. Therefore, that the salvation of men might be brought about more fitly and more surely, it was necessary that, besides natural knowledge and religion, they should learn the knowledge, love, and service of God by the ways of revealed religion. Thus we learn from the teaching of the Angelic Doctor (1, i, 1).

The necessity of divine revelation being thus admitted; the necessity of a living Church, to be its guardian, teacher, and interpreter, at once follows. This made Father Hugh Benson say that there *must* be a Church if the revelation of God is to be intelligible.

Looking abroad, then, into the world, there appears to be only *one* Church, properly so called, that both claims and exercises the right, the office, and the authority of guarding, teaching, and interpreting the revelation of God to the nations—this is the One, Holy, Catholic, and Roman Church; and naught but her. Outside her, peoples, sections, and groups have their religious *opinions*, with no power to impose such opinions on others. They may gather together in the beautiful cathedrals and churches of the country, for prayers, sermons, and exquisite music; but these are side-issues and accidentals, and are easily reduced to natural religion. They are not the Mass, the sacramental system, the living authority, committed by our Lord to his messenger the Church, with the obligation of believing and doing according to her word, bespeaking the very word of God himself.

And here we may remember how our Lord has committed his life and message to his Church—his sacramental and sacrificial life, and his living word—thus following his own universal law in nature and grace of giving to men his good things through the agency of his creatures, so that he and we may live and work together, the Church on earth thus standing as the symbol of the everlasting, its worship the beginning of an eternal homage, its unity and order the expressions of those heavenly facts which fill eternity.

Then, considering further how entirely souls have to be purified and perfected before they can attain to anything of the similitude of the heavenly

life to come, lest they should find themselves in the region of dissimilitude, we may observe how our Lord has placed in his Church all the most necessary and convenient ways and means that souls may need of attaining, little by little, to that full spiritual perfection of which their nature is capable and receptive, if they have the heart for the work, by means of desires and determinations that are commonly necessary for the doing of any work whatever. Children of the world have hearts, desires, and determinations for the ordinary works of natural life here below—why are we without the like in the divinest work of all? Anyhow, the Church is here, and the grace of God is here, for the doing of this divine work. Yet how many there are who "say, and do not," who are hearers of the law, but not doers of the work!

The Church, in her sacred science, shows us the way to spiritual perfection, and it is certain that there can be no entrance to the Kingdom of divine glory till this work is done. Grace is the beginning of the work, for grace is glory begun, and glory is grace perfected. The powers of grace, which are the theological virtues, show us the way, and carry us on to the end; faith, the illuminating power; hope, pressing us on towards the mark; and charity, the beginning of the end, because it is the unitive virtue, even here below. "God is charity: and he that abideth in charity, abideth in God, and God in him" (1 John iv 16). Besides being the unitive virtue, charity is the *moving* power.* And if we

* "Caritas ad omnes alias virtutes comparatur, et ut motor, et ut finis, et ut forma" (S. Thom., 3 Sent., D. 27, Q. 2, Art. IV, § III).

want the divinest rewards of heaven, we must move by the divine virtue. If this is not done, we fall upon natural activity, and move from the lower love of self or creatures; for let it be known that in all deliberate acts we move from love, as philosophy teaches—if not from the higher love, the lower. Thus a spiritual life means a grasping of the higher love of God, and this overflowing in love to our neighbour, and the letting this supplant the lower love of self, thus keeping nature in subordination to grace, and the human spirit in subordination to the divine spirit. Then the soul truly *goes on*, "forgetting the things that are behind and stretching forth to those that are before"; and if it is courageous and consistent in these ways, its life is a perpetual progress to its ultimate end, enjoying the life of union with God by love even now, day by day, and amassing stores of merits — supernatural merits — by the supernatural principle all along the line of life here below.

Under this divine governance and guidance a soul becomes a sharer more and more in the gifts and fruits of the Holy Ghost, so that when its call to the spiritual world comes it is ready to go soon to its heavenly home. But if all this is neglected, it implies that self-love has been working in the soul, instead of divine love; and for all such workings no supernatural rewards must be expected, because the working of the soul has been but natural; and the end is proportioned to the means.

All this, indeed, is the formation of a habit. We easily form natural habits, such as those of music,

language, or business. Why are we not as wise in spirituals as we are in temporals? Why do we not seize upon the divine habit of habits,* and make its formation the one great project of our life? This will not hinder us in the multifarious works of daily life, but will vastly help us therein, by giving zest and spirit to all we do. They will be all the better done, by the strength of the right spirit within—the divine *form* of all the virtues. Our outer works will then be taken up into the spiritual life and blended with it, and consecrated to faith, hope, and love divine; and our life here on earth will then be the sign and symbol of the everlasting life of heavenly love to come—begun here, to be carried on and perfected for ever hereafter.

* The *Caritas Dei et proximi.*

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